



POEMS
ON
THE ABDUCTION
OF THE
SLAVE TRADE;
WRITTEN BY
JAMES MONTGOMERY, JAMES GRAHAME,
AND
E. DENCIER

Embellished with Engravings
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TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER,
PATRON,
AND TO THE
DIRECTORS AND GOVERNORS,
OF THE
SOCIETY FOR BETTERING THE CONDITION OF
THE NATIVES OF AFRICA,
THIS WORK,

In Honour of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.
IS, BY PERMISSION, DEDICATED,
WITH THE MOST PROFOUND ADMIRATION
AND RESPECT,
BY THE PROPRIETOR AND PUBLISHER,

ROBERT BOWYER.

N^o 80, PALL MALL,
LONDON.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IN presenting this volume to the Public, the Proprietor feels it incumbent on him to state, that it has originated in his own earnest, but he trusts not unparticipated solicitude, to see a late illustrious act of the British Legislature popularly commemorated by a tribute of national genius.

He has therefore engaged in his cause the allied arts of Poetry and Painting, and hopes that the selection he has made of Authors, to assist his views, will meet with the approbation of the Public.

Of the part which the Proprietor has taken in the conduct of the work, it is not necessary to offer any farther information; the same feelings which impelled him to undertake it cannot but render him particularly anxious for its success. He trusts he may, without presumption, indulge the hope, that it will not be unworthy of public patronage; but under any circumstances of discouragement, he would still possess a source of satisfaction in the reflection, that he had at least made an effort to procure an honourable commemoration of that great legislative event which exalts the character of his age and country, which forms an epoch in the history of civilization, which vindicates our religion and our laws, and is not only connected with the dignity of the British Empire, but ultimately extends its influence to the best, dearest, and universal interests of mankind.

Lines explanatory of the Vignette in the Title-page.

PROMETHEUS DELIVERED.

‘ COME, Outcast of the human race,
‘ Prometheus, hail thy destined place !
‘ This rock protects the dark retreat,
‘ Unvisited by earthly feet ;
‘ We only shall thy mansion share,
‘ Who haunt the chamber of despair !
‘ The vulture, here, thy loathed mate—
‘ Rapacious minister of fate !
‘ Compels life’s ruddy stream to part
‘ With keenest torture from thy heart.
‘ Yet not to perish art thou doomed,
‘ Victim unspared, but unconsumed ;
‘ Death shall not sap thy wall of clay,
‘ That penal being mocks decay ;
‘ Live, conscious inmate of the grave,
‘ Live, outcast, captive, victim, slave !’

The Furies ceased ; the wrathful strain
Prometheus hears, and, pierced with pain,
Rolls far around his hopeless gaze,
His realm of wretchedness surveys ;
Then maddening with convulsive breath,
He moans or raves, imploring death.

Thus hours on hours unnumbered past,
And each more lingering than the last ;
When Io ! before his glazed sight,
Appears a form, in dauntless might.
'Tis he ! Alcides, lord of fame !
The friend of man, his noblest name !
Swift from his bow the arrow flies,
And prone the bleeding vulture lies.
He smites the rock, he rends the chain,
Prometheus rises man again !

Such, Africa, thy suffering state !
Outcast of nations, such thy fate !
The ruthless rock, the den of pain,
Were thine—oh long deplored in vain,
Whilst Britain's virtue slept ! at length
She rose in majesty and strength ;
And when thy marty'd limbs she viewed,
Thy wounds unhealed, and still renewed,
She wept ; but soon with graceful pride,
The vulture, Avarice, she defied,
And wrenched him from thy reeking side ;
In Britain's name then called thee forth,
Sad exile, to the social hearth,
From baleful Error's realm of night,
To Freedom's breath and Reason's light.



From a Model of the Solar System

GRANVILLE SHARPE.

Few individuals have had equal claims with GRANVILLE SHARPE, to the confidence of their countrymen and the esteem of mankind, the affection of contemporaries and the gratitude of posterity. Without pretension to rank or fortune, Mr. SHARPE came forth singly and unsupported in behalf of African slaves, and early in life acquired the title of the Negro's advocate.

At that period, the public in general acquiesced in the decision of Yorke and Talbot, who had declared, that neither baptism nor residence in England entitled a slave to reclaim his freedom. To confront such authority, supported by established usage, was an effort which, even to an experienced lawyer, might appear presumptuous; but Mr. SHARPE, whose philanthropy was nourished by patriotism, disregarded all considerations of prudence or interest, and without any design of embracing the profession, devoted three years of his life to legal pursuits, with the hope that he should eventually invalidate the testimony of Yorke and Talbot, and annul their verdict. At this time slaves were often advertised for sale; and although no marts were yet opened for their public exposition, it was to be feared that a regular system of human traffic might gradually become familiar to this country. The prerogative vested in the master, naturally produced a disposition to cruelty and oppression; and it was from an atrocious instance of this nature, that Mr. SHARPE was originally led to inquire how far our laws allowed the assumption of rights, repugnant to all the common principles and feelings of justice: the result of his investigation, was an *Essay on the dangerous tendency of tolerating slavery in England*, and the principles contained in this book, were soon established by the verdict of a British jury. The question was afterwards more fully discussed in the case of Somerset, a slave who had absconded from his master, with the persuasion that as an inhabitant of Britain, he was exonerated from a state of bondage. The issue of the trial was decisive; and it has ever since been one of our national privileges, that the slave who enters Britain, becomes free.

Animated by victory, and anticipating a still nobler triumph, Mr. SHARPE addressed a letter to Lord North, in which he forcibly represented the impropriety of sanctioning by the legislature a traffic condemned by the laws. The subject of emancipation was thus started to the public, and the frequent discussions which ensued, contributed essentially to render the idea of abolishing the slave trade, not only familiar but popular to the community.

After an interval of some years, Mr. SHARPE had the happiness to find his benevolent wishes adopted and strenuously supported by some of the most distinguished and enlightened of his compatriots. It is pleasing to observe, that he was the first to encourage Mr. Clarkson in his adventurous career; and that, with a docility which, even more than his previous efforts, bespeaks his attachment to the African cause, he was willing to become the pupil of younger men, to listen to any suggestions, to embrace any views, and promote any plans for the accomplishment of the one great object. His modesty partook as little of indolence, as his enterprize of ambition. During twenty years he regularly performed the duties of chairman to the committee for the abolition, and was never known to neglect any part of his office but that of taking the chair.

Such a man as GRANVILLE SHARPE cannot hope to steal to oblivion; the memory of his virtues and his talents belongs to his country; to her his name must be endeared as long as her laws and her liberties shall continue to subsist.



Pub'd by J. Chapman, 50, Pall Mall, London.

W. Washington Junr.

From a Model in Wax by M. G. Ladrillar.

THOMAS CLARKSON.

THOMAS CLARKSON was worthy to coalesce with Mr. Sharpe in the cause of humanity. The trial of Somerset, which occurred during his childhood, had left no impression on his mind; his zeal for the abolition of the slave-trade was accidentally excited by being engaged in the composition of an academical essay on Slavery, for which he obtained the first prize, at Cambridge. In the progress of his task, which he had undertaken from no other motive than the desire of literary distinction, his mind became deeply impressed with the importance of the subject; he was no longer capable of directing his attention to any other pursuit; the wretchedness of enslaved negroes was constantly in his thoughts. He found it impossible not to make some effort for their relief, and with the hope of exciting in other minds some correspondent feelings, he published his Essay in English; and was thus introduced to Sharpe and Ramsay, his literary precursors, and to a small society of Quakers, already interested in the abolition.

Encouraged by the discovery of so many friends, Mr. CLARKSON began to hope that the vision of his solitary hours might yet be realised, and in a moment of sanguine enthusiasm, pledged himself to his party to devote his life to the cause of humanity and liberty.

He had no sooner taken his resolution, than he was himself startled at the magnitude of his object. It was necessary to create in the public mind such imperious feelings of sympathy as should secure its cooperation and support. It was no less necessary to attach to the cause, a sufficient number of political characters, who might extort the attention of the legislature. To silence scepticism and prejudice, the most ample testimony must be collected, and the most compendious evidence produced. In the prosecution of his enterprize he was however aided by Sharpe, enlightened by Ramsay, and, above all, supported by Wilberforce.

Under these auspices was formed the Committee for the Abolition, to which Mr. CLARKSON constantly supplied that intelligence, respecting the

nature of the slave trade, from which Mr. Wilberforce drew his strongest arguments for the abolition. In the performance of his task, MR. CLARKSON was often placed in situations of difficulty and danger, and in the course of seven years travelled thirty-five thousand miles; nor were these his only labours, he corresponded with four hundred persons, and annually published some work illustrative of the subject. Overwhelmed with fatigue he was at length obliged to relinquish his post, and to devote some years to the re-establishment of his impaired constitution. In 1805, he was sufficiently recovered to resume his appropriate duties, and at length saw the termination of his labours, in the attainment of that object to which he had religiously dedicated his health and strength, his time and talents, all the powers of his mind, and the best portion of his life.

MR. CLARKSON has since published the History of the Abolition, a simple but substantial record of his own unexampled exertions, which renders praise as trivial as superfluous.



Pub'd by E. Dugay, 22, Newgate, London.

From a Model in Mrs. C. H. Collier's.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

MR. WILBERFORCE was not only the friend of enslaved negroes, but the advocate of the abolitionists. The committee found in him a patron and protector, who guided them by his experience, and enlightened them with his counsels; he was the organ by which their intelligence was communicated to the legislature. In him their researches became visible, their labours were rendered effective.

In his first masterly speech on the slave trade, Mr. WILBERFORCE took such a compendious view of the evils which it was calculated to produce, as not only seemed to enforce conviction but to silence remonstrance. So rich and various were his arguments, that those who supported his motion had only to re-echo his sentiments; even Burke, and Fox, and Pitt, the great masters of eloquence, ceded their claims to pre-eminence, and caught from him that admiration and enthusiasm which they were themselves accustomed to inspire.

During a long series of years, Mr. WILBERFORCE watched over the cause, never yielding to dejection, nor submitting to despondence; by his manly perseverance, still invigorating the exertions of his colleagues, and even renovating those whom disappointment had dispirited, or defeat subdued.

It cannot be doubted that the steadiness and vigilance displayed by Mr. WILBERFORCE, contributed essentially to sustain the strength of the party, through that long interval of doubtful expectation, in which they were sometimes without the prospect of success. It is equally obvious that the cause itself was in some degree ennobled by the character of its champion, a man unbiassed by interest and superior to ambition, subordinate to no party, and inflexible in his adherence to moral and religious principles.

The abolition of the slave trade is one of the most important events in

the history of British legislation. It is a test by which to measure the debasement or exaltation of moral feeling; it enables us to ascertain our progress in civilization, and so estimate the advantages which it confers on society; it affords a triumphant proof that private patriotism has been the source of public philanthropy; for on the foundation laid by GRANVILLE SMARRE, we behold the dignified and successful labours of WILBERFORCE.

TO THE PUBLIC.

THE following Poem was undertaken at the request of Mr. BOWYER, in May 1807. The Author had not the resolution to forego an opportunity of being presented before the Public, in a style of external magnificence, which he would never have had the assurance to assume unsolicited. Though he is convinced, that were it proper to explain the private history of this Work, he would be fully acquitted of presumption in having accepted the splendid invitation of the Proprietor, yet he cannot help feeling that an appearance so superb, instead of prejudicing the Public in his favour, will, in reality, only render him more obvious and obnoxious to criticism, if he be found unworthy of the situation in which he stands. Conscious, however, that he has exerted his utmost diligence and ability to do honour to his theme, and well aware that his poem can derive no lustre from the accompanying embellishments, unless it first casts a glory upon *them*, he thinks himself warranted to hope that it will be read and judged with the same indulgence, which, from past success, he believes it would have experienced had it been produced in a form more becoming his pretensions as a Man and a Writer.

There are some objections against the title and plan of this piece, which will occur to almost every reader. The Author will not anticipate them; he will only observe that the title seemed the best, and the plan the most eligible, that he could adapt to a subject so various and extensive, yet so familiar and exhausted;—a subject which had become antiquated by frequent, minute, and disgusting exposure; which afforded no opportunity to awaken, suspend, and delight curiosity, by a subtle

and surprising development of plot; and concerning which, Public feeling had been wearied into insensibility by the agony of interest which the question of the African Slave Trade excited during three and twenty years of intense and almost incessant discussion. That trade is at length abolished. May its memory be immortal; that henceforth it may be known only *by* its memory! for were it ever forgotten, it might be revived in some future age of the world, as a new discovery in commerce and policy.

Sheffield, Dec. 1, 1808.

THE
WEST INDIES,

A Poem.

IN FOUR PARTS.

BY

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction ; on the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—The Mariner's Compass.—Columbus.—The discovery of America.—The West Indian Islands.—The Caribs.—Their extermination.

'**T**HY chains are broken, Africa, be free!'
Thus saith the island-empress of the sea ;
Thus saith Britannia.—O ye winds and waves !
Waft the glad tidings to the land of slaves ;
Proclaim on Guinea's coast, by Gambia's side, 5
And far as Niger rolls his eastern tide'
Through radiant realms beneath the burning zone,
Where Europe's curse is felt, her name unknown,
'Thus saith Britannia, empress of the sea,
'Thy chains are broken, Africa, be free !' 10
Long lay the ocean-paths from man conceal'd ;
Light came from heaven,—the magnet was reveal'd,

A surer star to guide the seaman's eye
 Than the pale glory of the northern sky ;
 Alike ordain'd to shine, by night and day,15
 Through calm and tempest, with unsetting ray ;
 Where'er the mountains rise, the billows roll,
 Still with strong impulse turning to the pole,
 True as the sun is to the morning true,
 Though light as film, and trembling as the dew.20

Then man no longer crept with timid oars,
 And failing heart, along the sheltering shores ;
 Broad to the winds he spread his fearless sails,
 Defied the adverse, woo'd the favouring gales,
 Bared to the storm his adamantine breast,25
 Or soft on ocean's lap lay down to rest ;
 While free as clouds the liquid ether sweep,
 His white-wing'd vessels cours'd th' untravell'd deep ;
 Boldly from clime to clime he lov'd to roam,
 The waves his heritage, the world his home.30

Then first Columbus, with the mighty hand
 Of grasping genius, weigh'd the sea and land ;
 The floods o'erbalanc'd :—where the tide of light,
 Day after day, roll'd down the gulph of night,
 There seem'd one waste of waters :—long in vain35
 His spirit brooded o'er th' Atlantic main ;
 When, sudden as creation burst from nought,
 Sprang a new world through his stupendous thought,



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U.S.A. Page 5.

Light, order, beauty!—While his mind explor'd
 Th' unveiling mystery, his heart ador'd ;
 Where'er sublime imagination trod,
 He heard the voice, he saw the face, of God.

Far from the western cliffs he cast his eye
 O'er the wide ocean stretching to the sky :
 In calm magnificence the sun declin'd,
 And left a paradise of clouds behind :
 Proud at his feet, with pomp of pearl and gold,
 The billows in a sea of glory roll'd.

—Ah! on this sea of glory, might I sail,
 Track the bright sun, and pierce the eternal veil
 That hides from mortal sight the radiant bowers,
 Where in full noon he leads the midnight hours !

Thoughtful he wander'd on the beach alone ;
 Mild o'er the deep the vesper planet shone,
 The eye of evening, brightening through the west
 Till the sweet moment when it shut to rest :
 Whither, O golden Venus ! art thou fled ?
 Not in the ocean-chambers lies thy bed ;
 Round the dim world thy glittering chariot drawn
 Pursues the twilight, or precedes the dawn ;
 Thy beauty noon and midnight never see,
 The morn and eve divide the year with thee.

Soft fell the shades, till Cynthia's slender bow
 Crested the farthest wave, then sunk below :

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'Tell me, resplendent guardian of the night, 65
 'Circling the sphere in thy perennial flight,
 'What secret path of heaven thy smiles adorn,
 'What nameless sea reflects thy gleaming horn?

Now earth and ocean vanish'd, all serene
 The starry firmament alone was seen ; 70
 Through the slow, silent hours, he watch'd the host
 Of midnight suns in western darkness lost,
 Till night himself, on shadowy pinions borne,
 Fled o'er the mighty waters, and the morn
 Danc'd on the mountains :—'Lights of heaven!' he cried,
 'Lead on ;—I go to win a glorious bride ; 76
 'Fearless o'er gulphs unknown I urge my way,
 'Where peril prowls, and shipwreck lurks for prey :
 'Hope swells my sail ;—in spirit I behold
 'That maiden-world twin sister of the old, 80
 'By nature nurs'd beyond the jealous sea,
 'Deny'd to ages, but betroth'd to 'me.'

The winds were prosperous, and the billows bore
 The brave adventurer to the promis'd shore ;
 Far in the west, array'd in purple light, 85
 Dawn'd the new world on his enraptur'd sight :
 Not Adam, loosen'd from th' encumbering earth,
 Waked by the breath of God to instant birth,
 With sweeter, wilder wonder gaz'd around,
 When life within, and light without he found ; 90

The whole creation rushing o'er his soul,
 He seem'd to live and breathe throughout the whole.
 So felt Columbus when, divinely fair,
 At the last look of resolute despair,
 Th' Hesperian isles, from distance dimly blue,
 With gradual beauty open'd on his view.

95

In that proud moment, his transported mind
 The morning and the evening worlds combin'd,
 And made the sea, that sunder'd them before,
 A bond of peace, uniting shore to shore.

100

Vain, visionary hope ! rapacious Spain
 Follow'd her hero's triumph o'er the main,
 Her hardy sons in fields of battle try'd,
 Where Moor and Christian desperately died,
 A rabid race, fanatically bold,
 And steel'd to cruelty by lust of gold,
 Travers'd the waves, the unknown world explor'd,
 The cross their standard, but their faith the sword ;
 Their steps were graves; death track'd where'er they trod;
 They worshipp'd Mammon while they vow'd to God.

105

111

Let nobler bards in loftier numbers tell
 How Cortez conquer'd, Montezuma fell ;
 How grim Pizarro's ruffian arm o'erthrew
 The sun's resplendent empire in Peru ;
 How like a prophet old Las Casas stood,
 And rais'd his voice against a sea of blood,

115

Whose chilling waves recoil'd while he foretold
His country's ruin by avenging gold.

—That gold, for which unpitied Indians fell,
That gold at once the snare and scourge of hell, 120
Thenceforth by righteous heaven was doom'd to shed
Unmingled curses on the spoiler's head ;
For gold the Spaniard cast his soul away,—
His gold and he were every nation's prey.

But themes like these would ask an angel-lyre, 125
Language of light and sentiment of fire ;
Give me to sing in melancholy strains,
Of Charib martyrdoms, and negro-chains ;
One race by tyrants rooted from the earth,
One doom'd to slavery by the taint of birth ! 130

Where first his drooping sails Columbus furl'd,
And sweetly rested in another world,
Amidst the heaven-reflecting ocean, smiles
A constellation of elysian isles ;
Fair as Orion when he mounts on high, 135
Sparkling with midnight splendour from the sky :
They bask beneath the sun's meridian rays,
When not a shadow breaks the boundless blaze ;
The breath of ocean wanders through their vales
In morning breezes and in evening gales ; 140
Earth from her lap perennial verdure pours,
Ambrosial fruits, and amaranthine flowers ;

O'er the wild mountainous and luxuriant plains,
 Nature in all the pomp of beauty reigns,
 In all the pride of freedom.—NATURE FREE
 Proclaims that MAN was born for liberty : 145
 She flourishes where'er the sun-beams play
 O'er living fountains, sallying into day ;
 She withers where the waters cease to roll,
 And night and winter stagnate round the pole : 150
 Man too, where freedom's beams and fountains rise,
 Springs from the dust and blossoms to the skies ;
 Dead to the joys of light and life, the slave
 Clings to the clod ; his root is in the grave ;
 Bondage is winter, darkness, death, despair, 155
 Freedom the sun, the sea, the mountains, and the air.

In placid indolence supinely blest,
 A feeble race these beauteous isles possess'd ;
 Untam'd, untaught, in arts and arms unskill'd,
 Their patrimonial soil they rudely till'd, 160
 Chas'd the free rovers of the savage woods,
 Insnar'd the wild-fowl, swept the scaly floods ;
 Shelter'd in lowly huts their fragile forms.
 From burning suns and desolating storms ;
 Or, when the halcyon sported on the breeze, 165
 In light canoes they skimm'd the rippling seas :
 Their lives in dreams of soothing languor flew,
 No parted joys, no future pains they knew,

The passing moment all their bliss or care;
 Such as the sires had been, the children were
 From age to age; like waves upon the tide
 Of stormless time, they calmly liv'd and dy'd.

Dreadful as hurricanes, athwart the main
 Rush'd the fell legions of invading Spain,
 With fraud and force, with false and fatal breath, 175
 (Submission bondage, and resistance death,) 175

They swept the isles. In vain the simple race
 Kneel'd to the iron sceptre of their grace,
 Or with weak arms their fiery vengeance bray'd;
 They came, they saw, they conquer'd, they enslav'd, 180
 And they destroy'd;—the gen'rous heart they broke,
 They crush'd the timid neck beneath the yoke;
 Where'er to battle march'd their grim array,
 The sword of conquest plough'd resistless way;
 Where'er from cruel toil they sought repose, 185
 Around, the fires of devastation rose.

The Indian, as he turn'd his head in flight,
 Beheld his cottage flaming through the night,
 And, midst the shrieks of murder on the wind,
 Heard the mute blood-bound's death-step close behind.

The conflict o'er, the valiant in their graves, 191
 The wretched remnant dwindled into slaves;
 —Condemn'd in cells of pestilence and gloom
 To dig for treasures in his mother's womb,

The miner, sick of life-prob' acting breath, 195
 Inhal'd with joy the fire-damp blast of death :
 —Condemn'd to fell the mountain-palm on high,
 That cast its shadow from the evening sky,
 Ere the tree trembled to his feeble stroke,
 The woodman languish'd, and his heart-strings broke :
 —Condemn'd in torrid noon, with pals'y'd hand, 201
 To urge the slow plough o'er th' obdurate land ;
 The lab'rer, smitten by the sun's fierce ray,
 A corpse along th' unfinish'd furrow lay.
 O'erwhelm'd at length with ignominious toil, 205
 Mingling their barren ashes with the soil,
 Down to the dust the Charib-people pass'd,
 Like autumn foliage with'ring in the blast :
 The whole race sunk beneath th' oppressor's rod,
 And left a blank among the works of God. 210

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.

ARGUMENT.

The Cane.—Africa.—The Negro.—The Slave-carrying Trade.—The means and resources of the Slave Trade.—The Portuguese,—Dutch,—Danes,—French,—and English in America.

Among the bowers of paradise, that grac'd
Those islands of the world-dividing waste,
Where tow'ring cocoas wav'd their graceful locks,
And vines luxuriant cluster'd round the rocks;
Where orange-groves perfum'd the circling air,
With verdure, flowers, and fruit for ever fair;
Gay myrtle-foliage track'd the winding rills,
And cedar forests slumber'd on the hills;
—An eastern plant, ingrafted on the soil,
Was till'd for ages with consuming toil; 10
No tree of knowledge, with forbidden fruit,
Death in the taste, and ruin at the root,

Yet in its growth were good and evil found,
 It bless'd the planter, but it curs'd the ground ;
 While with vain wealth it gorg'd the master's hoard, 15
 And spread with manna his luxurions board,
 Its culture was perdition to the slave,
 It sapp'd his life, and flourish'd on his grave.

When the fierce spoiler from rapacious Spain
 Tasted the balmy spirit of the cane, 20
 (Already had his rival in the west,
 From the rich reed ambrosial sweetness press'd,)
 Dark through his thoughts the miser purpose roll'd
 To turn its hidden treasures into gold,
 But at his breath, by pestilent decay, 25
 The Indian tribes were swiftly swept away ;
 Silence and horror o'er the isles were spread,
 The living seem'd the spectres of the dead ;
 Naked and wild and ghastly lay the coasts,
 Furrow'd with graves, and coloniz'd with ghosts. 30
 The Spaniard saw ; no sigh of 'v stole,
 No pang of conscience touch sullen soul ;
 The tiger weeps not o'er the kid, —he turns
 His flashing eyes abroad, and madly burns
 For nobler victims, and for warmer blood : 35
 Thus on the Charib-shore the tyrant stood,
 Thus cast his eyes with fury o'er the tide,
 And far beyond the gloomy gulph deserty'd

Devoted Africa :—he burst away,
And with a yell of transport grasp'd his prey. 40

Where the stupendous Mountains of the Moon
Cast their broad shadows o'er the realms of noon ;
From rude Caffraria, where the giraffes browse,
With stately heads, among the forest boughs,
To Atlas where Numidian lions glow 45
With torrid fire beneath eternal snow ;
From Nubian hills that hail the dawning day,
To Guinea's coast where evening fades away,
Regions immense, unsearchable, unknown,
Bask in the splendour of the solar zone ; 50
A world of wonders,—where creation seems
No more the works of Nature but her dreams ;
Great, wild, and beautiful, beyond control,
She reigns in all the freedom of her soul ;
Where none can check her bounty, when she show's 55
O'er the gay wilderness her fruits and flowers ;
None brave her fury, when, with whirlwind-breath
And earthquake-step, she walks abroad with death ;
O'er boundless plains she holds her fiery flight,
In terrible magnificence of light ; 60
At blazing noon pursues the evening-breeze,
Through the dun gloom of realm-o'ershadowing trees ;
Her thirst at Nile's mysterious fountain quells,
Or bathes her swarthy limbs where Niger swells.

An inland ocean, on whose jasper rocks 63
 With shells and sea-flower-wreaths she binds her locks :
 She sleeps on isles of velvet verdure, placed
 Midst sandy gulps and shoals for ever waste ;
 She guides her countless flocks to cherish'd rills,
 And feeds her cattle on a thousand hills ; 70
 Her steps the wild bees welcome through the vale,
 From every blossom that embalms the gale ;
 The slow unwieldy river-horse she leads
 Through the deep waters, o'er the pasturing meads ;
 And climbs the mountains that invade the sky 75
 To soothe the eagle's nestlings when they cry.
 At sun-set, when voracious monsters burst
 From dreams of blood, awak'd by madd'ning thirst ;
 When the lorn caves, in which they shrunk from light,
 Ring with wild echoes through the hideous night ; 80
 When darkness seems alive, and all the air
 Is one tremendous uproar of despair,
 Horror and agony ;—on her they call ;
 She hears their clamour, she provides for all,
 Leads the light leopard on his eager way, 85
 And goads the gaunt hyæna to his prey.

In these romantic regions Man grows wild ;
 Here dwells the negro, nature's outcast child,
 Scorn'd by his brethren ; but his mother's eye,
 That gazes on him from her warmest sky, 90

Sees in his flexible limbs untutor'd grace,
 Power on his forehead, beauty in his face ;
 Sees in his breast, where lawless passions rove,
 The heart of friendship, and the home of love ;
 Sees in his mind, where desolation reigns,
 Fierce as his clime, uncultur'd as his plains,
 A soil where virtue's fairest flowers might shoot,
 And trees of science bend with glorious fruit ;
 Sees in his soul, involv'd in thickest night,
 An emanation of eternal light,
 Ordain'd, 'midst sinking worlds, his dust to fire
 And shine for ever when the stars expire.
 Is he not *Man*, though knowledge never shed
 Her quickening beams on his neglected head ?
 Is he not *Man*, though sweet religion's voice
 Ne'er bade the mourner in his God rejoice ?
 Is *he* not man, by sin and suffering tried ?
 Is *he* not man, for whom the Saviour died ?
 Belie the Negro's powers :—in headlong will,
 Christian ! *thy* brother, thou shalt prove him still ;
 Belie his virtues ; since his wrongs began,
 His follies and his crimes have stamp't him *Man*.

The Spaniard found him such :—the island-race
 His foot had spurn'd from earth's insulted face ;
 Among the waifs and foundlings of matankind,
 Abroad he look'd a sturdier stock to find ;

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A spring of life, whose fountains should supply
 His channels as he drank the rivers dry :
 That stock he found on Afric's swarming plains,
 That spring he open'd in the Negro's veins; 120
 A spring, exhaustless as his avarice drew,
 A stock that like Prometheus' vitals grew
 Beneath the eternal beak his heart that tore,
 Beneath the insatiate thirst that drain'd his gore.
 Thus childless as the Charibbeans died, 125
 Afric's strong sons the greening waste supplied ;
 Of harder fibre to endure the yoke,
 And self-renew'd beneath the severing stroke ;
 As grim oppression crush'd them to the tomb,
 Their fruitful parents' miserable womb 130
 Teem'd with fresh myriads, crowded o'er the waves,
 Heirs to their toil, their sufferings, and their graves.

Freighted with curses was the bark that bore
 The spoilers of the west to Guinea's shore;
 Heavy with groans of anguish blew the gales 135
 That swell'd that fatal bark's returning sails ;
 Old Ocean shrunk, as o'er his surface flew
 The felon-cargo, and the *dæmon* crew ;
 For fiends, usurping human form, began
 The man-degrading merchandize of man, 140
 And death-devoted wretches were the prey,
 Whose crimes had cast their heritage away,

Had forfeited for bondage, stripes and toil,
Their birthright freedom, and paternal soil.

—But keels unnumber'd as the waves that roll
From sun to sun, or pass from pole to pole,
Since that sad hour, across the gulph have borne
The innocent, from home and comfort torn ;

—The valiant, seiz'd in peril-daring fight ;

The weak, surpriz'd in nakedness and night ;
Subjects by mercenary despots sold ;

Victims of justice prostitute for gold ;

Brothers by brothers, friends by friends betray'd ;
Snar'd in her lover's arms the trusting maid ;

The faithful wife by her false lord estrang'd,
For one wild cup of drunken Miss exchang'd ;

From the brute-mother's knee, the infant-boy,
Kidnapp'd in slumber, barter'd for a toy ;

The father resting at his father's tree,

Doom'd by the son to die beyond the sea :

—All bonds of kindred, law, alliance broke,

All ranks, all nations crouching to the yoke ;

From fields of light, unshadow'd climes that lie

Panting beneath the sun's meridian eye,

From hidden Ethiopia's utmost land ;

From Zaara's fickle wilderness of sand ;

From Congo's blazing plains and blooming woods ;

From Whidah's hills, that gush with golden floods ;

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Captives of tyrant power, and dastard wiles,
 Dispeopled Africa, and gorg'd the isles. 170
 Loud and perpetual o'er th' Atlantic waves,
 For guilty ages, roll'd the tide of slaves ;
 A tide that knew no fall, no turn, no rest,
 Constant as day and night from east to west ;
 Still widening, deepening, swelling in its course, 175
 With boundless ruin, and resistless force.

Quickly by Spain's alluring fortune fir'd,
 With hopes of fame, and dreams of wealth inspir'd,
 Europe's dread powers, from ignominious ease
 Started ; their pennons stream'd on every breeze ; 180
 And still where'er Discovery's empire spread,
 The cane was planted and the native bled ;
 While nurs'd by fiercer suns, of nobler race,
 The negro toil'd and perish'd in his place.

First Lusitania,—she whose prows had borne 185
 Her arms triumphant round the ear of morn,
 —Turn'd to the setting sun her bright array,
 And hung her trophies o'er the couch of day.

Holland,—whose hardy sons roll'd back the sea
 To build the Halcyon-nest of liberty, 190
 —Shameless abroad th' enslaving flag unfurld,
 And reign'd a despot in the younger world.
 Denmark,—whose roving hordes, in barbarous times,
 Fill'd the wide north with piracy and crimes,



With Regd. to

Awed every shore, and taught heir keels to sweep 195
 O'er every sea, the Arabs of the deep,
 —Embark'd, once more to western conquest led
 By Rollo's spirit risen from the dead.

Gallia,—whose arms, of yore, while infant Rome
 Slept in her cradle, well-nigh seal'd her doom, 200
 (But lately laid with surer, deadlier blow
 The thrones of kings, the hopes of freedom low,)—
 —Rush'd headlong to partake the glorious toils,
 The bold adventures, and the splendid spoils.

Britannia,—she who scathed the crest of Spain, 205
 And won the trident sceptre of the main,
 When to the raging wind, and ravening tide,
 She gave the huge Armada's scatter'd pride,
 Smit by the thunder-wielding hand that hurl'd
 Her vengeance round the wave-encircled world; 210
 —She shared the gain, the glory, and the guilt,
 By her were Slavery's island-altars built,
 And fed with human victims;—till the cries
 Of blood, demanding vengeance from the skies,
 Pierc'd her proud heart, too long in vain assail'd; 215
 But justice in one glorious hour prevail'd:
 Straight from her limbs the tyrant's garb she tore,
 Spotted with pestilence, and thick with gore;
 O'er her own head with noble fury broke
 The grinding fetters, and the galling yoke, 220

Then plunged them in th' abysses of the sea,
And cried to weeping Africa—‘ Be free!’

Impatient spirit ! check thy timeless flight,
Nor sing the morn amidst the dead of night ;
The night of ages, in whose horrid shade
The sons of darkness ply'd their dæmon-trade ;
While Africa beheld her tribes, at home,
In battle slain ; abroad, condemn'd to roam
O'er the salt waves, in stranger-isles to bear,
(Forlorn of hope, and sold into despair,) 225
Through life's slow journey to its dolorous close,
Unseen, unwept, unutterable woes.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

PART III.

ARGUMENT.

*The Love of Country, and of Home, the same in all ages and among all nations.—
The Negro's Home and Country.—Mungo Parke.—Progress of the Slave
Trade.—The Middle Passage.—The Negro in the West Indies.—The Guinea
Captain.—The Creole Planter.—The Moors of Barbary.—Buccaneers.—
Maroons.—St. Domingo.—Hurricanes.—The Yellow Fever.*

THERE is a land, of ev'ry land the pride,
Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside ;
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
And milder moons emparadise the night ;
A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,
Time-tutor'd age, and love-exalted youth : 5
The wandering mariner, whose eye explores
The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,
Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,
Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air ; 10
In every clime the magnet of his soul,
Touch'd by remembrance, trembles to that pole :

For in this land of Heaven's peculiar grace,
The heritage of nature's noblest race,
There is a spot of earth supremely blest, 15
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,
Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride,
While in his soften'd looks benignly blend
The sire, the son, the husband, father, friend : 20
Here woman reigns ; the mother, daughter, wife,
Strews with fresh flowers the narrow way of life ;
In the clear heaven of her delightful eye,
An angel-guard of loves and graces lie ;
Around her knees domestic duties meet, 25
And fire-side pleasures gambol at her feet.
'Where shall that *land*, that *spot of earth* be found ?'
Art thou a man ?—a patriot ?—look around ;
O thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
That land *thy country*, and that spot *thy home* ! 30

On Greenland's rocks, o'er grim Kamschatka's plains,
In pale Siberia's desolate domains ;
When the wild hunter takes his lonely way,
Tracks through tempestuous snows his savage prey,
The reindeer's spoil, the ermine's treasure shares, 35
And feasts his famine on the fat of bears ;
Or, wrestling with the might of raging seas,
Where round the pole th' eternal billows freeze,

Plucks from their jaws the stricken whale, in vain
 Plunging down headlong through the whirling main;
 —His wastes of ice are lovelier in his eye 41
 Than all the flowery vales beneath the sky,
 And dearer far than Caesar's palace-dome,
 His cavern-shelter, and his cottage-home.

O'er China's garden-fields, and peopled floods; 45
 In California's pathless world of woods;
 Round Andes' heights, where Winter, from his throne,
 Looks down in scorn upon the summer zone;
 By the gay borders of Bermudas' isles,
 Where Spring with everlasting verdure smiles; 50
 On pure Madeira's vine-robed hills of health;
 In Java's swamps of pestilence and wealth;
 Where Babel stood, where wolves and jackalls drink,
 Midst weeping willows, on Euphrates' brink;
 On Carmel rest; by Jordan's reverend stream, 55
 Where Canaan's glories vanish'd like a dream;
 Where Greece, a spectre, haunts her heroes' graves,
 And Rome's vast ruins darken Tiber's waves;
 Where broken-hearted Switzerland bewails
 Her subject mountains and dishonour'd vales; 60
 Where Albion's rocks exult amidst the sea
 Around the beauteous Isle of Liberty;
 —Man, through all ages of revolving time,
 Unchanging man, in every varying clime,

Deems his own land of ev'ry land the pride,
Belov'd by heav'n o'er all the world beside;
His home a spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

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And is the Negro outlaw'd from his birth ?

Is he alone a stranger on the earth ?

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Is there no shed, whose peeping roof appears
So lovely that it fills his eyes with tears ?

No land, whose name, in exile heard, will dart
Ice through his veins and lightning through his heart ?

Ah ! yes ; beneath the beam of brighter skies,

75

His home amidst his father's country lies ;

There with the partner of his soul he shares
Love-mingled pleasures, love-divided cares ;

There, as with nature's warmest filial fire,

He soothes his blind, and feeds his helpless sire ;

80

His children sporting round his hut behold

How they shall cherish him when he is old,

Train'd by example from their tenderest youth

To deeds of charity and words of truth.^a

— Is he not blest ? Behold, at closing day,

85

The negro-village swarms abroad to play ;

He treads the dance through all its rapturous rounds

To the wild music of barbarian sounds ;

Or stretch'd at ease, where broad palmettos shower

Delicious coolness in his shadowy bower,

90



John Dugay 25.

He feasts on tales of witchcraft, that give birth
 To breathless wonder, or ecstatic mirth ;
 Yet most delighted, when in rudest rhymes
 The minstrel wakes the song of elder times,
 When men were heroes, slaves to Beauty's charms, 95
 And all the joys of life were love and arms.

—Is not the Negro blest? His generous soil
 With harvest-plenty crowns his simple toil ;
 More than his wants his flocks and fields afford,
 He loves to greet the stranger at his board : 100

‘ The winds were roaring, and the White Man fled ;
 ‘ The rains of night descended on his head ;
 ‘ The poor White Man sat down beneath our tree,
 ‘ Weary and faint, and far from home was he :
 ‘ For him no mother fills with milk the bowl, 105
 ‘ No wife prepares the bread to cheer his soul :
 ‘ —Pity the poor White Man, who sought our tree,
 ‘ No wife, no mother, and no home has he.’

Thus sang the Negro's daughters ;—once again,
 O that the poor White Man might hear that strain ! 110

—Whether the victim of the treacherous Moor ;
 Or from the Negro's hospitable door
 Spurn'd as a spy from Europe's dreaded clime,
 And left to perish for thy country's crime ;
 Or destin'd still, when all thy wanderings cease, 115
 On Albion's lovely lap to rest in peace ;

Pilgrim! in heaven or earth, where'er thou be,
 Angels of mercy guide and comfort thee!

Thus liv'd the Negro in his native land,
 Till Christian cruisers anchor'd on his strand ; 120
 Where'er their grasping arms the spoilers spread,
 The Negro's joys, the Negro's virtues fled ;
 Till far amidst the wilderness unknown,
 They flourish'd in the sight of Heaven alone :
 While from the coast, with wide and wider sweep, 125
 The race of Mammon dragg'd across the deep
 Their sable victims, to that western bourn,
 From which no traveller might e'er return,
 To blazon in the ears of future slaves
 The secrets of the world beyond the waves. 130

When the loud trumpet of eternal doom
 Shall break the mortal bondage of the tomb ;
 When with the mother's pangs th' expiring earth
 Shall bring her children forth to second birth ;
 Then shall the sea's mysterious caverus, spread 135
 With human relics, render up their dead :
 Though warm with life the heaving surges glow,
 Where'er the winds of heaven were wont to blow,
 In sevenfold phalanx shall the rallying hosts
 Of ocean-slumberers join their wandering ghosts, 140
 Along the melancholy gulph, that roars
 From Guinea to the Charibbean shores.



Vide Page 37.

Myriads of slaves, that perish'd on the way,
 From age to age the shark's appointed prey,
 By livid plagues, by lingering tortures slain,
 Or headlong plung'd alive into the main,^b
 Shall rise in judgment from their gloomy beds,
 And call down vengeance on their murderers' heads.

Yet small the number, and the fortune blest,
 Of those who on the stormy deep found rest,
 Weigh'd with the unremember'd millions more,
 That scaped the sea, to perish on the shore,
 By the slow pangs of solitary care,
 The earth-devouring anguish of despair,^c
 The broken heart which kindness never heals,
 The home-sick passion which the Negro feels,
 When toiling, fainting in the land of canes,
 His spirit wanders to his native plains;
 His little lovely dwelling there he sees
 Beneath the shade of his paternal trees,
 The home of comfort:—then before his eyes,
 The terrors of captivity arise.

—Twas night: his babes around him lay at rest,
 Their mother slumber'd on their father's breast:
 A yell of murder rang around their bed;^d
 They woke, their cottage blazed, the victims fled;
 Forth sprang the ambush'd ruffians on their prey,
 They caught, they bound, they drove them far away;

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The white man bought them at the mart of blood ;
 In pestilential barks they cross'd the flood ; 170
 Then were the wretched ones asunder torn,
 To distant isles, to separate bondage borne,
 Deny'd, though sought with tears, the sad relief
 That misery loves,—the fellowship of grief.

The Negro, spoil'd of all that nature gave 175
 The freeborn man, thus shrunk into a slave ;
 His passive limbs, to measur'd tasks confin'd,
 Obey'd the impulse of another mind ;
 A silent, secret, terrible control,
 That ruled his sinews, and repress'd his soul. 180
 Not for himself he waked at morning-light,
 Toil'd the long day, and sought repose at night ;
 His rest, his labour, pastime, strength, and health,
 Were only portions of a master's wealth ;
 His love—O name not love, where Britons doom 185
 The fruit of love to slavery from the womb.

Thus spurn'd, degraded, trampled and oppress'd,
 The negro-exile languish'd in the west,
 With nothing left of life but hated breath,
 And not a hope except the hope in death,
 To fly for ever from the creole-strand, 190
 And dwell a freeman in his father-land.

Lives there a savage ruder than the slave ?
 —Cruel as death, insatiate as the grave,

False as the winds that round his vessel blow, 195
 Remorseless as the gulph that yawns below,
 Is he, who toils upon the wafting flood,
 A Christian broker in the trade of blood ;
 Boisterous in speech, in action prompt and bold,
 He buys, he sells,—he steals, he kills, for gold. 200
 At noon, when sky and ocean, calm and clear,
 Bend round his bark, one blue unbroken sphere ;
 When dancing dolphins sparkle through the brine,
 And sunbeam-circles o'er the waters shine ;
 He sees no beauty in the heav'n serene, 205
 No soul-enchanting sweetness in the scene,
 But darkly scowling at the glorious day,
 Curses the winds that loiter on their way.
 When swoln with hurricanes the billows rise
 To meet the lightning midway from the skies ; 210
 When from th' unburthen'd hold his shrieking slaves
 Are cast at midnight to the hungry waves ;
 Not for his victims strangled in the deeps,
 Not for his crimes the harden'd pirate weeps,
 But grimly smiling when the storm is o'er, 215
 Counts his sure gains, and hurries back for more.^d

Lives there a reptile baser than the slave ?
 —Loathsome as death, corrupted as the grave,
 See the dull Creole at his pompous board,
 Attendant vassals cringing round their lord ; 220

Satiate with food, his heavy eyelids close,
 Voluptuous minions fan him to repose ;
 Prone on the noonday couch he lolls in vain,
 Delirious slumbers rock his maudlin brain ;
 He starts in horror from bewildering dreams, 225
 His bloodshot eye with fire and frenzy gleams ;
 He stalks abroad ; through all his wonted rounds,
 The negro trembles, and the lash resounds,
 And cries of anguish, shrilling through the air,
 To distant fields his dread approach declare. 230

Mark, as he passes, every head declin'd ;
 Then slowly raised,—to curse him from behind.

This is the veriest wretch on nature's face,
 Own'd by no country, spurn'd by every race ;

The tether'd tyrant of one narrow span, 235

The bloated vampire of a living man ;

His frame,—a fungus form, of dunghill birth,

That taints the air, and rots above the earth ;

His soul ;—has *he* a soul, whose sensual breast

Of selfish passions is a serpent's nest ? 240

Who follows headlong, ignorant and blind,

The vague brute-instinct of an ideot mind ;

Whose heart, midst scenes of suffering senseless grown,

E'en in his mother's lap was chill'd to stone ;

Whose torpid pulse no social feelings move ; 245

A stranger to the tenderness of love,

His motley haram charms his gloating eye,
 Where ebon, brown, and olive beauties vie ;
 His children, sprung alike from sloth and vice,
 Are born his slaves, and lov'd at market price : 250
 Has *He* a soul ?—with his departing breath,
 A form shall hail him at the gates of death,
 The spectre Conscience,—shrieking through the gloom,
 ‘ Man, we shall meet again beyond the tomb.’
 O Africa ! amidst thy children’s woes, 255
 Did earth and heaven conspire to aid thy foes ?
 No, thou hadst vengeance.—From thy northern shores
 Sallied the lawless corsairs of the Moors,
 And back on Europe’s guilty nations hurl’d
 Thy wrongs and sufferings in the sister world : 260
 Deep in thy dungeons Christians clank’d their chains,
 Or toil’d and perish’d on thy parching plains.

But where thine offspring crouch’d beneath the yoke,
 In heavier peals the avenging thunder broke.
 —Leagu’d with rapacious rovers of the main, 265
 Hayti’s barbarian hunters harass’d Spain ;
 A mammoth-race, invincible in might,
 Rapine and massacre their grim delight,
 Peril their element ;—o’er land and flood,
 They carried fire, and quench’d the flames with blood ;
 Despairing captives hail’d them from the coasts, 271
 They rush’d to conquest, led by Charib ghosts.

—Tremble, Britannia ! while thine islands tell,
 Th' appalling mysteries of Obi's spell ;
 The wild Maroons, impregnable and free,
 Among the mountain-holds of liberty,
 Sudder as lightning darted on their foe,
 Seen like the flash, remember'd like the blow.

—When Gallia boasts of dread Marengo's fight,
 And Hohenlinden's slaughter-deluged night,
 Her spirit sinks ;—the sinews of the brave,
 That crippled Europe, shrunk before the Slave;
 The dæmon-spectres of Domingo rise,
 And all her triumphs vanish from her eyes.

God is a spirit, veil'd from human sight
 In secret darkness of eternal light ;
 Through all the glory of his works we trace
 The hidings of his counsel and his face ;
 Nature and time, and change, and fate fulfil,
 Unknown, unknowing, his mysterious will ;
 Mercies and judgments mark him, every hour,
 Supreme in grace, and infinite in power :—
 Oft o'er the Eden-islands of the West,
 In floral pomp, and verdant beauty drest,
 Roll the dark clouds of his awaken'd ire ;

—Thunder and earthquake, whirlwind, flood and fire,
 Midst reeling mountains, and disparting plains,
 Tell the pale world,—‘ the God of vengeance reigns.’

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Nor in the majesty of storms alone,^b
 Th' eternal makes his fierce displeasure known ; 300
 At his command the pestilence abhor'd
 Spares the poor slave, and smites the haughty lord ;
 While to the tomb he sees his friend consign'd,
 Foreboding melancholy sinks his mind,
 Soon at his heart he feels the monster's fangs, 305
 They tear his vitals with convulsive pangs ;
 The light is anguish to his eye, the air
 Sepulchral vapours laden with despair ;
 Now frenzy-horrors rack his whirling brain,
 Tremendous pulses throb through every vein ; 310
 The firm earth shrinks beneath his torture-bed,
 The sky in ruins rushes o'er his head ;
 He rolls, he rages in consuming fires,
 Till nature spent with agony expires.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

P A R T IV.

A R G U M E N T.

The Moravian Brethren.—Their Missions in Greenland, North America, and the West Indies.—Christian Negroes.—The Advocates of the Negroes in England.—Granville Sharpe,—Clarkson,—Wilberforce,—Pitt,—Fox.—The Nation itself. The Abolition of the Slave Trade.—The future state of the West Indies,—of Africa,—of the whole World.—The Millennium.

Was there no Mercy, mother of the Slave !
No friendly hand to succour and to save,
While Commerce thus thy captive tribes oppress'd,
And lowering Vengeance linger'd o'er the west ?
Yes, Africa ! beneath the stranger's rod
They found the freedom of the sons of God.

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When Europe languish'd in barbarian gloom,
Beneath the ghostly tyranny of Rome,
Whose second empire, cowl'd and mitred, burst
A Phœnix from the ashes of the first ;
From Persecution's piles, by bigots fired,
Among Bohemian mountains Truth fired ;

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There 'midst rude rocks, in lonely glens obscure,
 She found a people scatter'd, scorn'd, and poor,
 A little flock through quiet vallies led, 15
 A Christian Israel in the desert fed,
 While ravening wolves, that scorn'd the shepherd's hand,
 Laid waste God's heritage through every land.
 With these the lovely Exile sojourn'd long ;
 Sooth'd by her presence, solac'd by her song, 20
 They toil'd through danger, trials, and distress,
 A band of Virgins in the wilderness,
 With burning lamps, amid their secret bowers,
 Counting the watches of the weary hours,
 In patient hope the Bridegroom's voice to hear, 25
 And see his banner in the clo — ppear :
 But when the morn returning enased the night,
 These stars that shone in darkness, sunk in light ;
 Luther, like Phosphor, led the conquering day,
 His meek forerunners waned, and pass'd away. 30
 Ages roll'd by, the turf perennial bloom'd
 O'er the lorn relics of those saints entomb'd ;
 No miracle proclaim'd their power divine,
 No kings adorn'd, no pilgrims kiss'd their shrine ;
 Cold and forgotten in the grave they slept ; 35
 But God remember'd them :—their father kept
 A faithful remnant ;—o'er their native clime
 His Spirit mov'd in his appointed time,

The race revived at his almighty breath,
A seed to serve him, from the dust of death. 40

' Go forth, my sons, through heathen realms proclaim
' Mercy to sinners in a Saviour's name :
Thus spake the Lord ; they heard, and they obey'd ;
—Greenland lay wrapt in nature's heaviest shade ;
Thither the ensign of the cross they bore ; 45
The gaunt barbarians met them on the shore ;
With joy and wonder hailing from afar,
Through polar storms, the light of Jacob's star.

Where roll Ohio's streams, Missouri's floods,
Beneath the umbrage of eternal woods, 50
The Red Man roam'd, a hunter-warrior wild ;
On him the everlasting Gospel smil'd ;
His heart was awed, confounded, pierced, subdued ;
Divinely melted, moulded, and renew'd ;
The bold, base Savage, nature's harshest clod, 55
Rose from the dust the image of his God.

And thou, poor Negro ! scorn'd of all mankind ;
Thou dumb and impotent, and deaf and blind ;
Thou dead in spirit ! toil-degraded slave,
Crush'd by the curse on Adam to the grave ! 60
The messengers of peace, o'er land and sea,
That sought the sons of sorrow stoop'd to thee.
—The captive rais'd his slow and sullen eye ;
He knew no friend, nor deem'd a friend was nigh,

Till the sweet tones of Pity touch'd his ears, 65
 And Mercy bathed his bosom with her tears ;
 Strange were those tones, to him those tears were strange,
 He wept and wonder'd at the mighty change,
 Felt the quick pang of keen compunction dart,
 And heard a small still whisper in his heart, 70
 A voice from heaven, that bade the outcast rise
 From shame on earth to glory in the skies.

From isle to isle the welcome tidings ran ;
 The slave that heard them started into man :
 Like Peter, sleeping in his chains he lay, 75
 The angel came, his night was turn'd to day ;
 ' Arise ! ' his fetters fall, his slumbers flee ;
 He wakes to life, he springs to liberty.

No more to Daemon-Gods, in hideous forms,
 He pray'd for earthquakes, pestilence, and storms, 80
 In secret agony devour'd the earth,
 And, while he spared his mother, cursed his birth :
 To heaven the Christian Negro sent his sighs
 In morning vows, and evening sacrifice ;
 He pray'd for blessings to descend on those 85
 That dealt to him the cup of many woes ;
 Thought of his home in Africa forlorn,
 Yet while he wept, rejoic'd that he was born.
 No longer burning with unholy fires,
 He wallow'd in the dust of base desires ; 90

Ennobling virtue fix'd his hopes above,
 Enlarged his heart, and sanctified his love ;
 With humble steps the paths of peace he trod,
 A happy pilgrim, for he walk'd with God.

Still slowly spread the dawn of life and day,
 In death and darkness pagan myriads lay ;
 Stronger and heavier chains than those that bind
 The captive's limbs, enthrall'd his abject mind ;
 The yoke of man his neck indignant bore,
 The yoke of sin his willing spirit wore.

Meanwhile among the great, the brave, the free,
 The matchless race of Albion and the sea,
 Champions arose to plead the Negro's cause ;
 In the wide breach of violated laws,
 Through which the torrent of injustice roll'd,
 They stood :—with zeal unconquerably bold,
 They raised their voices, stretch'd their arms to save
 From chains the freeman, from despair the slave ;
 The exile's heart-sick anguish to assuage,
 And rescue Afric from the spoiler's rage.

The miserable Mother, from the shore,
 Age after age, beheld the barks that bore
 Her tribes to bondage :—with distraction wrung,
 Wild as the lioness that seeks her young,
 She flash'd unheeded lightnings from her eyes ;
 Her inmost deserts echoing to her cries ;

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Till agony the sense of suffering stole,
 And stern unconscious grief benumb'd her soul.
 So Niobe, when all her race were slain,
 In ecstasy of woe forgot her pain; 120
 Cold in her eye serenest horror shone,
 While pitying nature sooth'd her into stone

Thus Africa, entranced with sorrow, stood,
 Her fix'd eye gleaming on the restless flood :
 —When Sharpe, on proud Britannia's charter'd shore, 125
 From Lybian limbs th' unsanction'd fetters tore,
 And taught the world, that while she rules the waves,
 Her soil is freedom to the feet of slaves :
 —When Clarkson his victorious course began ;^d
 Unyielding in the cause of God and man, 130
 Wise, patient, persevering to the end,
 No guile could thwart, no power his purpose bend,
 He rose o'er Afric like the sun in smiles,
 He rests in glory on the western isles ;
 —When Wilberforce, the minister of grace, 135
 The new Las Casas of a ruin'd race,
 With angel-might oppes'd the rage of hell,
 And fought like Michael till the dragon fell.
 —When Pitt supreme amid the senate, rose
 The Negro's friend among the Negro's foes ; 140
 Yet while his tones like heaven's high thunder broke,
 No fire descended to consume the yoke.

—When Fox, all-eloquent for freedom stood,
 With speech resistless as the voice of blood,
 The voice that cries through all the Patriot's veins, 145
 When at his feet his country groans in chains;
 The voice that whispers in the mother's breast,
 When smiles her infant in his rosy rest ;
 Of power to bid the storm of passion roll,
 Or touch with sweetest tenderness the soul. 150
 He spake in vain ;—till with his latest breath
 He broke the spell of Africa in death.

The Muse to whom the lyre and lute belong,
 Whose song of freedom is her noblest song.
 The lyre with awful indignation swept, 155
 O'er the sweet lute in silent sorrow wept,
 —When Albion's crimes drew thunder from her tongue,
 —When Afric's woes o'erwhelm'd her while she sung.
 Lamented Cowper ! in thy path I tread ;
 O that on me were thy meek spirit shed ! 160
 The woes that wring my bosom once were thine ;
 Be all thy virtues, all thy genies mine !
 Peace to thy soul ! thy God thy portion be ;
 And in His presence may I rest with thee !

Quick at the call of Virtue, Freedom, Truth, 165
 Weak withering age, and strong aspiring youth,
 Alike th' expanding power of pity felt ;
 The coldest, hardest hearts began to melt ;

From breast to breast the flame of justice glow'd ;
 —High o'er its banks the Nile of mercy flow'd ; 170
 Through all the isle the gradual waters swell'd ;
 Mammon in vain th' encircling flood repell'd ;
 O'erthrown at length, like Pharaoh and his host,
 His shipwreck'd hopes lay scatter'd round the coast.

High on her rock, in solitary state, 175
 Sublimely musing, pale Britannia sate ;
 Her awful forehead on her spear reclin'd,
 Her robe and tresses streaming with the wind ;
 Chill through her frame foreboding tremors crept ;
 The Mother thought upon her Sons, and wept : 180
 —She thought of Nelson in the battle slain,
 And his last signal beaming o'er the main ;
 In Glory's circling arms the hero bled,
 While Victory bound the laurel on his head ;
 At once immortal, in both worlds, became 185
 His soaring spirit, and abiding name :
 —She thought of Pitt, heart-broken, on his bier ;
 And " my Country ! " echoed in her ear :
 —She thought of Fox ;—she heard him faintly speak,
 His parting breath grew cold upon her cheek, 190
 His dying accents trembled into air,
 " Spare injured Africa ! the Negro spare ! "

She started from her trance !—and round the shore,
 Beheld her suppliant sons once more

Pleading the suit so long, so vainly tried, 193
 Renew'd, resisted, promised, pledged, denied,
 The Negro's claim to all his Maker gave,
 And all the tyrant ravish'd from the slave.
 Her yielding heart confess'd the righteous claim, 200
 Sorrow had soften'd it, and love o'ercame ;
 Shame flush'd her noble cheek, her bosom burn'd ;
 To helpless, hopeless Africa she turn'd ;
 She saw her sister in the Mourner's face,
 And rush'd with tears into her dark embrace :
 ' All hail ! ' exclaim'd the Empress of the sea, 205
 ' Thy chains are broken, Africa be free ! '
 ' All hail ! ' replied the Mourner, ' She who broke
 My bonds shall never wear a stranger's yoke.'
 Muse ! take the harp of prophecy :—behold !
 The glories of a brighter age unfold : 210
 Friends of the outcast ! view th' accomplish'd plan,
 The Negro towering to the height of man.
 The blood of Romans, Saxons, Gauls and Danes,
 Swell'd the rich fountain of the Briton's veins ;
 Unmingled streams a warmer life impart, 215
 And quicker pulses to the Negro's heart :
 A dusky race, beneath the evening sun,
 Shall blend their spousal currents into one :
 Is beauty bound to colour, shape or air ?
 No ; God created all his offspring fair. 220

Tyrant and slave their tribes shall never see,
For God created all his offspring free;

Then Justice leagued with Mercy, from above,
Shall reign in all the liberty of love;

And the sweet shores beneath the balmy west

225

Again shall be 'the islands of the blest.'

Unutterable mysteries of fate

Involve, O Africa! thy future state.

—On Niger's banks, in lonely beauty wild,

A Negro-mother carols to her child :

230

'Son of my widow'd love, my orphan joy!

'Avenge thy father's murder, O my boy!'

Along those banks the fearless *infant* strays,

Bathes in the stream, among the eddies plays;

See the *boy* bounding through the eager race;

235

The fierce *youth*, shouting foremost in the chace,

Drives the grim lion from his ancient woods,

And smites the crocodile amidst his floods.

To giant strength in unshorn *manhood* grown,

He haunts the wilderness, he dwells alone.

240

A tigress with her whelps to seize him sprung,

He tears the mother, and he tames the young

In the drear cavern of their native rock;

Thither wild slaves and fell banditti flock;

He heads their hords, they burst like torrid rains

245

In death and devastation o'er the plains;

Stronger and bolder grows his ruffian band,
 Prouder his heart, more terrible his hand.
 He spreads his banner; crowding from afar,
 Innumerable armies rush to war; 250
 Resistless as the pillar'd whirlwinds fly
 O'er Lybian sands, revolving to the sky,
 In fire and wrath through every realm they run,
 Where the noon-shadow shrinks beneath the sun;
 Prone at the Conqueror's feet, from sea to sea, 255
 A hundred nations bow the servile knee;
 O'er prostrate nature's unreveal'd domains,
 The Jenghis Khan of Africa, he reigns.

Dim through the night of these tempestuous years
 A sabbath dawn o'er Africa appears; 260
 Then shall her neck from Europe's yoke be freed,
 And healing arts to hideous arms succeed;
 At home the bonds of peace her tribes shall bind,
 Commerce abroad espouse them with mankind,
 While pure Religion's hands shall build and bless 265
 The church of God amidst the wilderness.

Nor in the isles and Africa alone,
 Be the Redeemer's cross and triumph known:
 Father of Mercies! speed the promis'd hour;
 Thy kingdom come with all-restoring power; 270
 Truth, virtue, knowledge, spread from pole to pole,
 As round the world the ocean waters roll!

—Hope waits the morning of celestial light ;
 Time plumes his wings for everlasting flight !
 Unchanging seasons have their march begun ; 275
 Millennial years are hastening to the sum ;
 Seen through thick clouds by Faith's transpiercing eyes,
 The New Creation shines in purer skies.
 —Ali hail !—the age of crime and suffering ends ;
 The reign of righteousness from heaven descends ; 280
 Vengeance for ever sheathes the afflicting sword ;
 Death is destroy'd, and Paradise restor'd ;
 Man, rising from the ruins of his fall,
 Is one with God, and God is All in All.

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST PART.

NOTE S.

PART I.

Note ^a line 6.—*far as Niger rolls his eastern tide.*—Mungo Parke, in his travels, ascertained that “the great river of the Negroes” flows *eastward*. It is probable, therefore, that this river is either lost among the sands, or empties itself into some inland sea, in the undiscovered regions of Africa. See also Part II. line 64.

Note ^b line 82. *Denied to ages, but betroth'd to me.*—When the Author of *The West Indies* conceived the plan of this introduction of Columbus, he was not aware that he was indebted to any preceding poet for a hint on the subject; but some time afterwards, on a second perusal of SOUTHEY's *MABOU*, it struck him that the idea of Columbus walking on the shore at sunset, which he had hitherto imagined his own, might be only a reflection of the impression, made upon his mind long before, by the first reading of the following splendid passage. He therefore gladly makes this acknowledgment, though at his own expense, in justice to the Author of the noblest narrative Poem in the English language, after the *FAERIE QUEENE*, and *PARADISE LOST*.

- ‘ When evening came, toward the echoing shore
- ‘ I and Cadwallon walk'd together forth;
- ‘ Bright with dilated glory shone the west;
- ‘ But brighter lay the ocean flood below,
- ‘ The burnish'd silver sea, that heav'd and flash'd
- ‘ Its restless rays intolerasly bright.
- ‘ Prince !’ quoth Cadwallon, ‘ thou hast rode the waves
- ‘ In triumph when th' Invader felt thine arm.
- ‘ O what a nobler conquest might be won

'There,—upon that wide field!—' What meanest thou?"
 I cried;—"That yonder waters are not spread
 'A boundless waste, a bourne impassable;
 'That thou shouldst rule the elements;—that there
 'Might manly courage, manly wisdom find
 'Some happy isle, some undiscover'd shore,
 'Some resting place for peace. Oh! that my soul
 'Could seize the wings of morning! soon would I
 'Behold that other world, where yonder sun
 'Now speeds to dawn in glory."

PART II.

Note * line 9. *An eastern plant ingrafted on the soil.*—The Cane is said to have been first transplanted from Madeira to the Brazils, by the Portuguese, and afterwards introduced by the Spaniards into the Charibee Islands. See also line 21, below.

PART III.

Note * line 84. *To deeds of charity and words of truth.*—Dr. WINTERBOTTOM says, 'The respect which the Africans pay to old people is very great.—One of the severest insults which can be offered to an African is to speak disrespectfully of his mother.'—'The negro race is perhaps the most prolific of all the human species. Their infancy and youth are singularly happy. The mothers are passionately fond of their children.' *Goldbury's Travels.*—"Strike me," said my attendant, "but do not curse my mother." The same sentiment I found universally to prevail.—One of the first lessons in which the Mandingo women instruct their children is the practice of truth.—It was the only consolation for a negro mother whose son had been murdered by the Moors, that *the poor boy had never told a lie.*" *Park's Travels.* The description of African life and manners that follows, and the song of the Negro's Daughters, are copied without exaggeration from the authentic accounts of MUNGO PARK.

Note^a. line 146. *Or heaving plunged alive into the main.* On this subject the following instance of almost incredible cruelty was substantiated in a court of justice.

In this year, certain underwriters desired to be heard against Gregson and others of Liverpool, in the case of the ship Zong, captain Collingwood, alleging that the captain and officers of the said vessel threw overboard one hundred and thirty-two slaves alive into the sea, in order to defraud them, by claiming the value of the said slaves, as if they had been lost in a natural way. In the course of the trial, which afterwards came on, it appeared, that the slaves on board the Zong were very sickly; that sixty of them had already died; and several were ill and likely to die, when the captain proposed to James Keisall, the mate, and others, to throw several of them overboard, stating 'that if they died a natural death, the loss would fall upon the owners of the ship, but that, if they were thrown into the sea, it would fall upon the underwriters.' He selected accordingly one hundred and thirty-two of the most sickly of the slaves. Fifty-four of these were immediately thrown overboard, and forty-two were made to be partakers of their fate on the succeeding day. In the course of three days afterwards the remaining twenty-six were brought upon deck to complete the number of victims. The first sixteen submitted to be thrown into the sea; but the rest with a noble resolution would not suffer the officers to touch them, but leaped after their companions and shared their fate.

The plea, which was set up in behalf of this atrocious and unparalleled act of wickedness, was, that the captain discovered, when he made the proposal, that he had only two hundred gallons of water on board, and that he had missed his port. It was proved, however, in answer to this, that no one had been put upon short allowance, and that, as if Providence had determined to afford an unequivocal proof^b of the guilt, a shower of rain fell and continued for three days immediately after the second lot of slaves had been cast^c ~~out~~^d by means of which they might have filled many of their vessels^e with water, and thus have prevented all necessity for the destruction of the third.

Mr. Sharp was present at this trial, and procured the attendance of a short-hand writer to take down the facts, which should come out in the course of it. These he gave to the public afterwards. He communicated them also, with a copy of the trial, to the Lords of the Admiralty, as the guardians of justice upon the seas, and to the Duke of Portland, as prin-

^a It appeared that they filled six.

'pal minister of state.' No notice however was taken by any of these of 'the information which had been thus sent them.' *Clarkson's History of the Abolition, &c.* Page 95—7.

Note * line 154. *The earth-devouring anguish of despair.*—The negroes sometimes, in deep and irrecoverable melancholy, waste themselves away by secretly swallowing large quantities of earth. It is remarkable that "earth-eating," as it is called, is an *infection*, and even a *social malady*; plantations have been occasionally almost depopulated, by the Slaves, with one consent, betaking themselves to this strange practice, which speedily brings them to a miserable and premature end.

Note * line 216. *Counts his sure gains and hurries back for more.* See Note *.

Note * line 217. *Lives there a reptile baser than the slave? &c.* The character of the Creole Planter here drawn is justified both by reason and fact: it is no monster of imagination, though, for the credit of human nature, we may hope that it is a monster as rare as it is shocking. It is the double curse of slavery to degrade all who are concerned with it, *doing or suffering*. The slave himself is the lowest in the scale of human beings,—except the slave-dealer. Dr. PINKARD's *Notes on the West Indies*, and CAPTAIN STEDMAN's *Account of Surinam*, afford examples of the cruelty, ignorance, sloth, and sensuality of Creole Planters, particularly in Dutch Guiana, which fully equal the epitome of vice and abomination exhibited in these lines.

Note * lines 265—6. *Leagued with rapacious rovers of the main,
Hoyti's barbarian hunters harass'd Spain.*

Alluding to the Freebooters and Buccaneers, who infested the Caribbean seas during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and were equally renowned for their valour and brutality.

Note * line 274. *The appalling mysteries of Obi's spell.* See DALLAS's *History of the Maroons*, among the mountains of Jamaica: also Dr. MOSSELEY's *Treatise on Sugar*.

Note * line 290. *Nor in the majesty of storms alone, &c.* See Dr. PINKARD's *Notes on the West Indies*, Vol. III, particularly Letter XII.

PART IV.

Note ^a line 30. *His meek forerunners waned and pass'd away, &c.* The context preceding and following this line alludes to the old BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BRETHREN who flourished long before the reformation, but afterwards were almost lost among the Protestants, till the beginning of the eighteenth century, when their ancient episcopal church was revived in Lusatia by some refugees from Moravia. See CRANTZ's *Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*.—Histories of the missions of the brethren in Greenland, North America, and the West Indies, have been published in Germany; those of the two former have been translated into English. See Crantz's *History of Greenland*, and LOSKIEL's *History of the Brethren among the Indians in North America*.—It is only justice here to observe, that Christians of other denominations have exerted themselves with great success in the conversion of the negroes. No invidious preference is intended to be given to the Moravians; but knowing them best, the author particularized this society.

Note ^b line 81—2. *In secret agony devour'd the earth,
And while he spared his mother, curs'd his birth.*

See notes ^b and ^c Part III.

Note ^c line 125. *When Sharpe, on proud Britannia's charter'd shore, &c.* GEANVILLE SHARPE, Esq. after a struggle of many years against authority and precedent, established in our courts of justice the *law of the Constitution*, that there are no slaves in England, and that the fact of a negro being found in this country is of itself a proof that he is a freeman.

Note ^d line 129. *When Clarkson his victorious course began.* No panegyric which a conscientious writer can bestow, or a good man may receive, will be deemed extravagant for the modest merits of Mr. Clarkson by those who are acquainted with his labours. See his *History of the Abolition*, &c. two volumes, lately published.

Note ^e line 136. *The new Las Casas of a ruin'd race.* The author of this poem confesses himself under many obligations to Mr. Wilberforce's eloquent letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, addressed to the Freeholders of Yorkshire, and published in 1807, previous to the decision of the question.—

LAS CASAS has been accused of being a promoter, if not the original projector, of the Negro Slave Trade to the West Indies. The ABBE GRÉGOIRE some years ago published a defence of this great and good man against the degrading imputation. The following, among other arguments which he advances, are well worthy of consideration.

The Slave Trade between Africa and the West Indies commenced, according to Herrera himself, the first and indeed the only accuser of Las Casas, nineteen years before the epoch of his pretended project.

Herrera, (from whom other authors have negligently taken the fact for granted, on his bare word) does not quote a single authority in support of his assertion, that Las Casas recommended the importation of negroes into Hispaniola. The charge itself was first published thirty-five years after the death of Las Casas. All writers antecedent to Herrera, and contemporary with him, are silent on the subject, although several of these were the avowed enemies of Las Casas. Herrera's veracity on other points is much disputed, and he displays violent prejudices against the man whom he accuses. It may be added, that he was greatly indebted to him for information as an historian of the Indies.

In the numerous writings of Las Casas himself, still extant, there is not one word in favour of slavery of any kind, but they abound with reasoning and invective against it in every shape; and among his eloquent appeals, and comprehensive plans, on behalf of the oppressed Indians, there is not a solitary hint in recommendation of the African Slave Trade. He only twice mentions the negroes through all his multifarious writings; in one instance he merely names them as living in the islands, (in a manuscript in the National Library at Paris) and in the same work he proposes *no other* remedy for the miseries of the aboriginal inhabitants, than the suppression of the *repartimientos*, or divisions of *the people*, with the soil on which they were born.— In another memorial, after detailing at great length the measures which ought to be pursued for the redress of the Indians (the proper opportunity certainly to advocate the Negro Slave Trade if he approved of it,) he adds, ‘The Indians are not more tormented by their masters, and the different public officers, than by their servants, *and by the negroes*’.

The original accusation of Las Casas, translated from the words of Herrera, is as follows:—‘The Licentiate Bartholomew Las Casas, perceiving that his plans experienced on all sides great difficulties, and that the expectations which he had formed from his connexion with the High Chancellor, and the favourable opinion the latter entertained of him, had not produced any

effect, projected other expedients, such as to procure for the Castilian established in the Indies a cargo of negroes, to relieve the Indians in the culture of the earth and the labour of the mines; also to obtain a great number of working men (from Europe,) who should pass over into those regions, with certain privileges, and on certain conditions which he detailed.'

Let this statement be compared with Robertson's most exaggerated account, avowedly taken from Herrera alone, and let every man judge for himself, whether one of the most zealous and indefatigable advocates of freedom that ever existed, 'while he contended earnestly for the liberty of the people born in one quarter of the globe, laboured to enslave the inhabitants of another region, and in his zeal to save the Americans from the yoke, pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impose one still heavier on the Africans.' *Robertson's History of America*, Vol. I. Part III. But the circumstance, connected by Dr. ROBERTSON with this supposed scheme of Las Casas, is unwarranted by any authority, and makes his own of no value. He adds 'the plan of Las Casas was adopted. Charles (V.) granted a patent to one of his Flemish favourites, containing an exclusive right of importing four thousand negroes into America.' Herrera, the only author whom Dr. Robertson pretends to follow, does not, in any place, associate his random charge against Las Casas with this acknowledged and most infamous fact. The crime of having first recommended the importation of African slaves into the American islands, is attributed by three writers of the life of Cardinal Ximenes, (who rendered himself illustrious by his opposition to the trade in its infancy) to Chievres, and by two others to the Flemish nobility themselves, who obtained the monopoly aforementioned, and which was sold to some 'Genoese merchants for 25,000 ducats, and they were the first who brought into a regular form that commerce for slaves between Africa and America, which has since been carried on to such an amazing extent.'—It is unnecessary to say more on this subject.—A translation of Gregory's defence of Las Casas was published in 1803 by H. D. Symonds, Paternoster Row.

Note 1. line 182. *And his last signal beaming o'er the main.*

'England expects every man to do his duty.'

AFRICA DELIVERED;

OR,

THE SLAVE TRADE ABOLISHED.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

BY

JAMES GRAHAM.

IS NOT THAT THE FAIR THAT I HAVE DEDICATED TO HONOR THE BANDS OF
WICKENMEEDE, TO UNDO THE HEAVY BURNING, AND TO SETTLE OPPRESSED
GO FREE, AND THAT TO BREAK EVERT CHAIN? —— JOHN BROWN.

PART I.

CRUDELIS UBIQUE
LUCTUS, UBIQUE PAVOR, ET PLURIMA MORTIS IMAGO.

AEN. II.

Beyond Sahara's wilderness, where heaves
The arid surge, o'erwhelming in its sweep
Horse, horseman, and the camel's towering crest,
As by the stars the struggling caravan,
At midnight hour, their sultry voyage steer; 5
Beyond that wilderness the nations dwelt
In peace and happiness: no foreign foe
Had crossed the desert or had ploughed the main,
Conveying warfare and the seeds of war.
There bounteous nature with spontaneous hand 10
Has scattered every herb, tree, shrub, and flower,
That ministers to man's delight or use:
Bud, blossom, fruit, adorn at once the boughs,
While mid the gay festoons full many a bird,
Of plumage various, brilliant as the hues 15

127

Of tulip bells, & sister blossoms seem :
In that fair land of hill, and dale, and stream,
The simple tribes from age to age had heard
No hostile voice, save when the lion's roar
Or tiger's howl was heard far in the woods ; 20
Far in the woods was then the lion's haunt,
For then each bow was bent, each lance was poised
Against the savage tenants of the wild ;
More savage men as yet were there unknown.
Safe on the Atlantic beach the old and young 25
In mirth and revelry were wont to join ;
Beneath his plantain tree the father sat,
And, while his children joyous played around,
Indulged the hope, unmixed with a fear,
That in the midst of them his days should end. 30

Behold the dire reverse, nor turn aside
From scenes of crimes, of cruelties and woes.
Horror my theme ! no soothing strain I sing :
Let selfish sensibility wink hard,
And bar both ears against the rude assault ; 35
There still are manly minds who bend a look
Steadfast on guilt in all its hideous forms,
Who misery firm survey with tearless eye,
Yet melting heart, and hand prompt to relieve.
Truth, gloomy truth, tho' robed in weeds deep drench'd
In blood, should meet unveiled the public view, 41

And real tragedy, at last assume
 That spacious stage, round which an audience draws
 Numerous as they who speak Britannia's tongue.

In day's full noontide glare, see Murder roam 45
 Undauntedly, and aim the fateful ball
 With keen remorseless eye, boasting the deed
 By which a husband and a father falls ;
 Then hurries off his unprotected prey,
 A frantic widow with her orphan babes.

Now Treachery lurks beneath the flowery smile
 Of meeting friends, and stings with double pang.

Even princes traitors prove, and oft conspire
 To sell their subjects : lo, at midnight hour
 The royal mandate lights the treacherous flame 55
 That o'er the deep-hushed hamlet ruin spreads.^b

Wildered with terror, parents, children flee,
 But rush upon a fate, than what they shun
 More dreadful ; every bond that binds to life
 Burst, never to be joined, and in their stead
 Chains, dungeons, torments, torturing disease,
 With but one melancholy beam of hope 60
 Reflected faintly from a watery tomb.

And whence this whelming pestilence of crimes ?
 'Twas Europe sent the daemон mission forth, 65
 Soon as her sons had learnt the magnet's power.—
 Mysterious pilot ! whose wide ken discerns,

Unerringly, through star-enshrouding storms,
 The polar lamp; whose restless tremulous hand,—
 Whether the labouring ship couch 'twixt the waves, 70
 Or reeling quiver on the foaming ridge,—
 Still points aright, and guides her o'er the deep.

But soon the foul preeminence in guilt
 By England was engrossed. From Mersey's bay,
 Or turbid Severn, mark the gallant ship, 75
 Gaily bedecked; a scene of seeming joy,
 Where many a heavy and repentant heart
 Sees the green shore recede, the mountains grey
 Sink from the straining sight, and nought all round
 But wave and sky. Ere long sweet-scented air,
 From Lusitania's groves, swell every sail
 With fragrance, every heart with vernal joy:
 Smiling the aged helmsman turns to breathe
 The balmy gale; while from the topmast height
 The ship-boy spies the blossom-gilded shore 85
 And thinks how happy is the land-boy's life,
 Who fearless climbs among the loaded boughs.
 These shores glide fast away, and Atlas frowns
 Far o'er the deep: the fire-peaked Teneriffe
 Amid the gloom of night is first descried: 90
 With day, the islands falsely happy called
 Pass in review, and tropic waves succeed,
 Sagacious of the taint that still adheres



Indelible to decks long drenched with gore,
 Death-omening birds supply a convoy dire; 95
 Or forward flocking, ere the ship appear,
 Wheel clamorous, and perch upon the beach,
 Sure harbingers of wretchedness to him
 Who daily with the sun, to scan the deep,
 Yon mountain climbs; leading with boding breast 100
 His playful boy. And how the sails appear
 Hung in the dim horizon; freedom's flag,
 Britannia's glowing ensign, is descried;
 Then full in view the floating prison-house,
 The Pandorean ark of every curse. 105
 Imagination can combine to blast
 Poor human life, comes rolling o'er the surge.
 The mother strains her infant to her breast,
 And weeps to think her eldest born has reached
 Those years, which, tender though they be, provoke 110
 The white man's thirst of gain, more dreadful far
 The white man's scowl, than the couched lion's glare!
 Fiercely the mid-day sun beat overhead;
 No shadow followed Maliel's playful steps,
 As from the field, where he had watched to scare 115
The plundering birds, he sought the neighbouring wood
 To drink the water from the chaliced herb;—
 Sudden a hurrying step behind he hears:
 It is the white man's tread. Trembling he flies

To reach the friendly grove; when deep, a roar,
 The thunder of the new-waked lion's mouth,
 Comes full upon his ear: the oppressor's hand
 With fetters loaded, or the lion's paw,—
 Such is the dire alternative he views;—
 Forward he flies and darts into the wood.

190

195

B small the sum of evil that results
 From individual crime, though deep their dye,
 Compared to that destruction which awaits
 On war, on war incited by the arts
 Of men, professing to obey the words
 Of Him, whose law was peace.

190

The murderous league,
 The bribe for blood, is struck, the doom pronounced,
 By which a peaceful unoffending race
 Are sentenced to the sword, to exile, chains.—
 Calm was the eve, and cooling was the gale
 That gently fanned Koöma's Bentang tree:
 Beneath its canopy the aged throng
 Sat garrulous, and praised the lightsome days
 Of better years, yet blessed their lot that now,
 Beneath the boughs which waved above their sires,
 They see their children round about them sport
 In mirthful rings, or hear the horn that sounds
 The herd's approach: alas, 'tis not the sound
 Of herdsman's horn — it is the trumpet's voice,

195

140

145

145

Distant as yet, and faint among the hills.
 Homeward each warrior hies and grasps the spear,
 And slings the quiver o'er his throbbing breast,
 Trembling for those who weeping round him wait,
 But bold in conscious courage and his cause. — 150

Quick round the Bentang, all in martial guise,
 The dauntless phalanx eager is arrayed ;
 Not one who claims, though but in half-formed voice,
 The name of man, waits for the chieftain's call :
 Even boys, who scarce can string their childish bows, 155
 Press keenly forward, and like untrained dogs
 Are rated home. To stem the tide of war,
 Forward the warriors haste : the foe appears,
 The bonbalon resounds ; the murderous yell,
 Impatient of delay, is raised ; no pause 160
 Allowed for marshalling, with van to van,
 Opponent, stretched in parallel array,
 But line with line, the chiefs at either head,
 Is fiercely joined, like two infuriate snakes
 That crested meet, entwining, till convolved 165

They form a writhing globe, and poisoned die
 By mutual wounds. Not so the combat ends
 That seals Koöma's doom : right yields to power.
 O'erwhelmed by numbers, fathers, husbands, lie
 Dead, bleeding, dying; blessed are the dead ! 170

They bear not the oppressor's chain, nor feel
 The belted ir'on; while from a neighbouring hill
 The pale-faced, ruthless author of the war,
 Surveys the human harvest reaped and boun.^{1.}

Fire, sword, and rapine, sweep away at once

175

The cottage with its inmates, and transform
 The happy vale into a wilderness;

No human being, save the bowed down,

And children that scarce lisp a father's name,

Is left: as when a forest is laid low,

180

Haply some single and far sundered trees

Are spared, while every lowly shrub and flower,

That sheltered smiled, droops shivering in the breeze.

And now the wretched captives, linked in rows,

In sad community of chains, drag on

185

Their iron-cumbered limbs, while oft the scourge

Or unclosed wound leaves in the thirsty sand

The traces of their miserable way.

At last the fainting victims reach the shore,

Where low they lie, dispersed in mournful bands;

190

Then are unbound, to bear the butcher gripe

Of brutal traffickers, or join the dance,

Mockery of mirth! to harmony of whips.

The bargains finished, pitiless is the night,

Most lamentable are the peals of cries,

195

The groans of parents from their children torn,
Of brother, sister severed; every tie
Of kindred by one rude revulsion given.

Yet such is not the cruel lot of all:

Some kindred groups remain entire, and find
The solace of society in woe.

Behold a father driven with his sons,
The mother with her nursling in her arms.—

To meet yon ship, now newly hove in sight

And unsupplied, the trader with his flock

Hastes to the water edge, where waits his boat

Its human cargo: first the sire is bound

And thrown beneath a bench; the rest unbound

Implicit follow where affection leads:

His darling boy hastes in and lays him down,

A gentle pillow to his father's head,

And with his little hand would dry the tears

That fill the upward-turned, despairing eye.

Quick plunge the oars; fleetly to eyes unused

The land retreating seems, while the huge ship

Comes towering on with all her bulging sails;

And now she sighs, and now her shadow spreads

Dark o'er the little barge's captive freight,

Like vulture's wings above the trembling lamb.

Alas, another captive-loaded keel

Plies from the shore to meet the floating mart.

200

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220

Ah, who is he that in the dimpling track
 Elbows the brine? He is a boy, bereft
 Of sight, and worthless in the trader's eye ;
 The only remnant to a father left 225
 Of all his children ; he the best beloved,
 Because most helpless; yet no prayer will move
 The felon merchant to admit the child
 To share the fetters which his father bind :
 And now he gains upon the sounding oars 230
 That guide his following course, and now the side
 Eager he grasps, and, though still pushed away,
 Still he returns, till frequent on his hands
 He feels the bruising blow; then down he sinks,
 Nor makes one faint endeavour for his life. 235

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.

DIRE WAS THE TOSSING, DEEP THE GROANS: DESPAIR
BUSIEST FROM COUCH TO COUCH TENDED THE SICK.

PARADISE LOST.

Heave the anchor, on your handspikes rise !
Yo *yea* resounds amid the buzz confused
Ascending from the hold with groans and shrieks
That cannot be repressed ; and now full sail
To catch the breeze, that scarce the canvass fills,
The floating herse nods onward o'er the waves. 5

But even yet the victims have not reached
The utmost pitch of misery, for the gale
With gentle sigh the canvass scarcely fills,
And all the hatches are full open thrown,
Giving free entrance to the breath of life : 10
Yet, in the' imperfect truce of corporal sufferance,
'Tis then that agony most keenly gnaws
The tortured soul : the father then deplores

His infants left without or stay or shield
From fraud and rapine, save a mother's arm :—

- And shall I never see my smiling boy,
- Whose every look was sunshine to my breast?
- And shall I never gaze upon that face,
- Or watch with seemingly indifferent eye
- His little sports? Ah now no more he'll sport;
- No more he'll run to climb these fettered limbs;
- No more the gentle pressure of his lips,
- And hands my cheek soft-stroking, I shall feel
- Now, now, he weeps, and calls on me in vain;
- He is an orphan now; O could I die
- And hover o'er his poor and friendless head!
- Have white men children?
- O may they live to see their infants crushed
- Between the diving alligator's jaws.

In such an hour as this the daughter thinks
Of her poor aged father. ‘Who (she means)

- Will sleepless watch, and raise his languid head,
- Softly and patient as a daughter's hand?
- Who now will listen to his tales of old,
- With which he once beguiled my childhood's hours?’

Night comes apace; but darkness is forbid
The view of misery from itself to shroud.
A glimmering lamp's dim beam faintly displays
The rows of living corpses to the sight;

As if the white men grudged that even one sense
Should cease to be the instrument of woe.

But misery exquisite the vital powers
Exhausts, till sleep, unhoped, weighs down at last
The weary eyelids of a favoured few.—

When thus the tragic scene of present things
Is shut, the visionary past unfolds,
Soothing with transient bliss the mourner's breast :
Again the father fancies that he's couched
Amid his children in their lowly hut ;

Once more he fancies that he wakes and sees
The placid visage of his sleeping boy,
And then his eyes meek opening in a smile,
Followed by lisping accents of delight :
To clasp the child, he tries his shackled arms
To stretch ; roused by the galling iron, he doubts,
He fears ; the dread reality he feels ;
Despair, despair comes rushing on his soul,
Like the dread cataract's din to one embarked
Upon a peaceful river, who forgets,—

Gliding along, from danger yet afar,
Entranced in pleasure with the goodly sight
Of lofty boughs, o'er-arching half the stream,
With melody of birds, upon these boughs,
That sing alternately and gaily plume
Their beauteous wings, and with the quiet lapse

45

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65

Of the smooth flood that bears him to his fate,—
 Forgets the thundering precipice of foam
 That boils below, till suddenly aroused,
 He hears at once and views his dreadful doom.

70

But mental anguish is ere long absorbed
 In hideous pangs that rack, excruciate,
 The frame corporeal ; for now the waves
 Begin to heave and shew their distant crests ;
 The gathering clouds in meeting currents roll,
 Contracting heaven's expanded canopy
 Into a lurid vault. The sails are reefed ;
 All hatches closed ; the confined captives pant
 For air ; and in their various languages
 Implore, unheard, that bat a single board
 Be raised : vain prayer, for now the beetling surge
 Breaks o'er the bow, and boils along the deck.
 Oh then the horrors of the deep below !
 Disease bursts forth, and, like the electric shock
 Sudden strikes through at once the prostrate ranks.
 Fierce fever pours his lava from the heart
 And burns through every vein ; convulsion writhes
 Foaming, and gnaws and champs his twisted arm ;
 Dire triemus bends his victim on the wheel
 Of torment, rivets close the firm-screwed jaw
 In fearful grin, and makes death lovely seem
 Dreadful the imprecations, dire the shrieks,

75

80

85

90

That mingle with the maniac laugh ; the gnash
 Of teeth, delirium's fitful song, now gay,
 Plaintive at times, then deeply sorrowful.

95

In such a scene Death deals the final blow,
 In pity, not in wrath : 'tis he alone
 That here can quench the fever's fire, unloose
 The knotted tendon ; he alone restores
 The frantic mind, that soon as freed ascends
 To Him who gave it being.

100

One endless day, one night that seemed a year,
 The billows raged ; so long the slaves, immured,
 Struggled 'twixt life and death. At last the winds
 Abate ; subside the waves ; the fastened boards
 Unfold, and full o'erhead the hopeless eye
 Sees, from his wooden couch, once more the sun
 Dim through the cloud that to the topmast steams.

105

The dead are dragged above, and to the dead
 Enchained oftentimes is dragged a living man.
 The female captives next, freed from their cage,
 Breathe the pure air, leading their little ones.
 Oh what a sight ! The miserable man,
 Who sees his child among the wailing crowd,
 Above its little head his shackled arms
 Circling, enfolds it to his anguished breast.

110

Then comes the sad repast, and loathing lips
 Are forced to share it. Some on death resolved

115

All sustenance refuse; then creaks the screw
 Of torture; then the knotted scourge resounds,^b 120
 Soaking itself in blood: with aspect firm,
 With such a look as triumphed on the face
 Of Scævola fixed on his shrivelling hand,
 The African his dreadful fate sustains,
 And clings to his resolve: nature at last¹²⁵
 Sinks under agony, and death's mild arm
 The brandished lash arrests. Another yields,
 Not to the furrowing scourge, or torture iron,
 In vain applied, but to a kneeling wife
 And infants kneeling suppliant by her side.¹³⁰

The boatswain now, unequal to his task,
 Repeated oft, protracted long, demands
 Assistance to his weary, flagging arm,—
 When straight the Captain rolls his savage eye
 Around the bustling crew, and bends it stern¹³⁵
 Upon a youthful mariner: the youth
 Shudders to hear the daemon work assigned
 To him; his hand, instinctively drawn back,
 Shrinks from the offered instrument of blood.

Ah! now he thinks, 'in evil hour I left,^c
 'With wandering spirit smit, fair Coila's hills,
 'And sought the sea.' On Doona's banks he dwelt,
 His parents' pride. The fear and love of God,
 The love of all that lives, his dawning years

Were taught, and oft, when, with exploring eye,145
 He roamed the bushy dingle, and had found
 The well-hid prize, he thought upon the words,
 Which in the sacred volume he had read,
Thou shalt not with the young ones take the dam,
*But shalt in any wise let her go free :*150

Thus early had he mercy's lesson learnt :
 And still by precept, but example more,
 His parents bent his infant mind to pity.
 Nor, when grown up, to aid his father's hand,155
 Did he forget, as o'er the furrowed field
 He whistling drove the team, to spare the lash.
 Oft now, at midnight watch, that furrowed field ;
 The loaning sweet which homeward from it led ;
 The old ash trees around the garden plat ;
 The heartsome roof round which, at gloamin hour,160
 With many a sudden turn the reremouse wheeled ;
 The pebble-bedded bourn in which he launched
 His ship of sedge, (alas! 'twas then first rose
 His seaward wish) and followed it far down,
 Within the hearing of the warlock linn ;—165
 These recollections soothe his sorrowing heart.
 But who can paint the agony he proves
 When brooding o'er the rueful parting day!
 His father's faltered blessing, and the hand
 Of tremulous grasp ; a mother's cheerful look170
 Assumed, and giving way at last to tears ;

His truelove's sighs, her broken words of grief,
 The vows exchanged, the speechless, last embrace,
 And that sad look ! that turning, farewell look !—
 Of equal years with her, and such in shape 175
 And stature, was a maid self doomed to death,
 Whom shrinking timid from the brutal gaze,
 Unpitying men suspended to the shrouds,
 Holding before her eyes this only choice,
 Food or a scourge ; the pitying youth persists 180
 To spurn the offered instrument of blood.
 ‘ Sheer mutiny ! ’ vociferates the wretch,
 The self-appointed judge ;) ‘ haste, bind him up,
 ‘ And let the trenching scourge at every stroke
 ‘ Be buried in his flesh, until the ribs, 185
 ‘ Laid bare, disclose the pausing wheels of life.’
 Infliction follows sentence ; death winds up
 The hideous tragedy, and friendly waves
 The mangled corse fold in a watery shroud.
 Is this the nursery ’twixt whose wooden walls 190
 Are reared the men who shield Britannia’s shores ?
 No ; ’tis their prison, lazarus-house, and bier.

Contagion spreads apace from man to man ;
 Nor the poor comforts of their piteous state
 Are granted to the sick ; no place have they 195
 Whereon to lay them down and die in peace.
 The seaman’s swinging couch has given place
 To human stowage ; on the deck’s bare board.



Vide page 71.

Or haply on a chest, he lies outstretched ;
 And, for the soothing voice and tender hand,
 He hears reproach, and feels the brutal blow. 200
 Suspicion is conviction; and the man,
 Who scarce can raise his throbbing head, is doomed,
 (As if he feigned disease) panting and pale,
 To feel the harrowing stripes; he breathes his last!—

Dearth next approaches, handmaid of disease, 205
 With slow but certain step : the measured draught
 Of water is dealt out with cautious hand ;
 For now the sails hang wavering in the breeze;
 The lambent waves rise gently on the prow ;
 His bulk the following sluth-hound of the deep 210
 Rolls, gambolling, and shews his vault-like gorge ;
 And every sign foretels a lasting calm.

Fainting, the breeze dies gradually away,
 Till not a breath is felt ; the vessel lies
 Moveless, as if enthralled in Arctic ice, 215
 While fierce, with perpendicular rays, the sun
 Withers up life, and from within thirst burns
 Unquenched : O then, amid the earnest prayer
 For death, the tongue, parched, to the mouth's roof cleaves:
 Right busily death runs his welcome rounds, 220
 The aged man now striking, now the youth,
 And now the infant in its mother's arms.

There was (almost incredible the tale !)

A wretch whose lips condemned a mother's hands
 To drop her murdered infant in the deep. 220
 Murdered ! yes foully murdered, is each one
 Who dies a captive in the horrid trade.
 And yet there have been men, and still there are,
 Who vindicate such murder; men who preach
 That gain and custom sanction every crime. 230

Slight mitigation of the seaman's lot
 The shades of evening bring: but who in words
 The aggravated misery can unfold
 Of the poor slaves, who, thrust below, endure
 The double deprivation, water, air!— 235
 With horror at the picture fancy draws,
 Language, appalled, shrinks faltering from the task.

O God ! how large a portion of the ills
 Of human kind derives itself from man !
 Deeming the land too narrow for his crimes, 240
 He penetrates the deserts of the main.
 How sad the contrast 'twixt that floating scene,
 That little world of misery condensed,
 By man created, and the view around
 Of Nature's works ! how peaceful ocean lies 245
 Unseen, reflecting all the heavenly host,
 While to the rolling eye, above, below,
 Wide sparkles, not a single hemisphere,
 But one vast concave globe of radiant orbs.

Seven days and nights the deep a mirror lay 250
To sun, and moon, and stars; and ere the wind
Began again to whisper through the shrouds,
The living scarce were equal to the work
Of burying the dead: the dying hear 256
The frequent plunge, and clasp their hands in prayer
That their appointed hour may be the next;
Contending sharks, full many a fathom down,
Are seen in act of tearing, limb from limb,
The sinking corpse, that finds a living grave.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

P A R T III.

HINC EXAUDIRI GEMITUS, ET SEVA SONARE
VERBERA : TUM STRIDOR FERRI, TRACTEQUE CATENÆ.

ÆN. VI.

Land! land! the sea-boy, from the topmast height,
Proclaims, in feeble voice, scarce audible :
Land, land, (most blessed sound to sailors' ears !)
Flies on the wings of joy from man to man.
Alas ! 'tis only to the free a sound
Of joy ; invigorated by that sound,
They mount the shrouds, and gaze until the eye
Aches at the gladsome sight ; the dying man
Raises his languid head, sinks down again,
Nor feels the general joy ; for well he knows
That, should he reach the shore, 'twill be his grave.

The crowded haven opens to the view,
And soon within the pier the vessel lies.
The remnants of the cargo are borne forth,

10

And warehoused, till, with food and drugs vamped up,
They're fitted for the market; then, led out,

16

They prove the misery of a second sale;

And those few ties of kindred, which by death
Have not been severed, now at last are torn.

O 'tis most piteous to behold the child,—

A daughter to a widowed mother left,—

20

Kneel to the hardened purchaser, and clasp
His knees in agony, praying by signs

Not to be parted: stern the ruffian spurns

The grasp of filial love: her hands unloosed

Clasp in a last embrace her mother's neck,

25

And scarcely yield to force of many arms.

Dispersed, with eyes uplifted from the ground,

They take their various ways, to various tasks condemned.

Most part, with hoe in hand, fill up the ranks

That in the cane-field toiled, by suffering thinned.

30

Beneath the scorching ray, the aged man,

The tender maid, the boy, the nursing mother

Sinking beneath the double load, her work

And infant, all must ply an equal task,

Without regard to age, or strength, or sex;

35

Must ply and must perform; the flagging step

That breaks the line, or arm that slurs its work,

Is prompted by the driver's biting lash,

And tears and blood bedew the rising plants.

Nor is it only in the field of toil
The whip resounds; no, every petty fault
Is duly journalled, till the wretch, whose trade
Is torture, comes in stated round, with cry
Of *slaves to flog!* then stretched upon the ground,
The trembling victim, to the ringbolts fixed,
Receives at once the sentence and the stroke.
In agony the soil he gnaws; his shrieks,
Heard in the festive hall, are drowned in peals
Of mirth; and, should a stranger's voice presume
To plead for mercy, even the female hand
With taunt demoniac fills the cup brim-full,
And sends it to give spirit to the arm
That brings out music from a pipe so rude.

And what the crime that merits such a doom?
Perhaps some word less servile than beseems 55
The lips of slave addressed to tyrant's ear:
Perhaps a look of conscious worth and pride,
Interpreted contempt by him who feels
How well he merits that contempt he dreads.

What horrid cries, unlike aught earthly, pierce . . . 60
The astonished ear, and make hushed midnight frown
A deeper gloom ! from yonder waving light
They seem to come : O what a sight o'erpowers . . .
The shuddering sense ! a youthful female writhes,
Hung by one hand, while still the other strives . . . 65

To ward, with shrivelling grasp, the blazing torch ;
 But soon the hand, sealed up in moveless clutch,
 Avails not for defence ; and now the flame
 With hissing noise clings round her heaving breast.—

Each human feeling outraged, nature's laws 70
 Reversed, the mother full of sorrow hears
 Her new-born infant's cry, the test of life ;
 She knows the misery of the bondman's lot.

But what a scene of joy surrounds the grave,
 The breach through which the prisoner has escaped ! 75
 With songs they celebrate the joyful day ;
 To mirthful songs they beat the covering sod,
 Then in a ring join hands and dance around.
 But brief their hour of melancholy joy ;
 The horn of labour breaks the mirthful ring 80
 And summons to the field. Day after day
 Ceaseless they toil ; the Sabbath, called their own,
 Is still their master's ; respite it brings none
 From toil ; for on that day the narrow plat,
 Whose produce furnishes the Negro's board, 85
 Requires the hand of culture. Voice of prayer,
 Heart-soothing psalmody, or preacher's words,
 They never hear : their souls are left a waste,
 Where slavery's weeds choke up each wholesome herb.

And is it for a system such as this, 90
 That Britain sends devoted legions forth,

The victims not of warfare but disease !
 What is the clashing steel, or cannon's roar,
 Death's toys and baubles ! what the thundering surge,
 Compared to pestilence's silent tread, 95
 That like the angel sent through Pharaoh's land
 (O would Britannia read the lesson right)
 The bondman's dwelling passes o'er untouched !

What hecatombs of human beings die
 Upon thy altar, Commerce ! Ages hence 100
 Thy bloody superstition will arouse
 The horror of mankind, as now the rites
 Almost incredible of Saturn's shrine,
 At which the infant died to expiate
 The parent's guilt. Behold that far-stretched line 105
 Of Britain's sons in martial pomp arrayed,
 With waving banners and the full accord
 Of music, soul-inspiring power, approach
 The farewell beach : and hark (a little year
 Gone round) that solitary drum and fife,
 And company of sunburnt visages,— 110
 'Tis rightly named, *The Skeleton returned.*

END OF THE THIRD PART.

P A R T IV.

'AND THEY SHALL BUILD HOUSES AND INHABIT THEM; AND THEY SHALL PLANT VINEYARDS AND EAT THE FRUIT OF THEM. THEY SHALL NOT BUILD AND ANOTHER INHABIT; THEY SHALL NOT PLANT AND ANOTHER EAT.'

ISAIAH LXV. 21, 22.

HAIL! Africa, restored to human rights!
Blest be the hand benign of him who stretched
The royal sceptre forth, and, with the touch
Electric of Britannia's will, consumed
The tyrant's chain, yet left the slave unscathed!
And blest, Columbia, be thy distant shores!
For they the peal with joy and freedom fraught
Re-echoed, till it reached the coast of blood,
And with redoubled thunder stunned the ear
Of Murder as he aimed the fatal blow.

5

10

Hail! Africa, to human rights restored!
Glad tidings of great joy to all who feel
For human kind! to him who sits at ease
And looks upon his children sport around

In health and happiness, even him ye bring
 Delight ne'er felt before : the dying saint,
 Whose hymning voice of joy is fainter heard
 And fainter still, like the ascending lark,
 As nearer heaven he draws, hears the glad words,
 And bursts into a louder strain of praise : 15
 The aged cottager, on sabbath eve,
 Amid his children and their children opes
 That portion of the sacred book, which tells,
 How with a mighty and an outstretched arm
 The Lord delivered Israel from his bonds ; 20
 Then kneeling blesses God that now the curse
 Of guiltless blood lies on this land no more.
 Even they who ne'er behold the light of heaven
 But through the grated ir'on, forget awhile
 Their mournful fate ; and mark a gleam of joy 25
 Pass o'er each fellow captive's clouded brow.

Nor was the sympathy of joy confined
 Within this narrow sphere ; the tidings flew
 To heaven on angel wings ; loud then the peal
 Of choiring seraphim arose ; and bright 30
 A radiance from the throne of God diffused,
 Its lustre shed upon th' assembled throng.

But still imperfect is the work of love.

Ye generous band, united in the cause
 Of liberty to Africa restored,



Vista page 37.

O may your hands be strong, and hearts be firm
 In that great cause ! so may you reap the meed
 Most grateful to your hearts, the glorious view
 Of peace reviving, ignorance dispelled,

The arts improved, and, O most blessed thought ! 45
 That faith which trampled Slavery under foot,
 And led captivity in captive chains,
 Embraced by men in superstition sunk.

Already I behold the wicker dome,

To Jesus consecrated, humbly rise

Below the sycamore's wide spreading boughs :

Around the shapeless pillars twists the vine ;

Flowers of all hues climb up the walls, and fill

The house of God with odours passing far

Sabean incense, while combined with notes

Most sweet, most artless, Zion's songs ascend,

And die in cadence soft ; the preacher's voice

Succeeds ; their native tongue the converts hear

In deep attention fixed, all but that child

Who eyes the hanging cluster, yet withholds,

In reverence profound, his little hand.

The faith of Jesus far and wide expands,

Till warfare, humanised, assumes the garb

Of mercy ; captives now no more are slaves ;

No more the negro dreads the white man's eye ;

No more, from hatred to the teacher, spurns

45

50

55

60

65

Instruction : gladly he receives the boon
 Of science and of art. What ecstasy
 O'erpowers his faculties when first he sees
 The wonders of the telescopic power ; 70
 The woody mountain side is brought so near,
 He reaches forth to pull the loaded spray ;—
 But when, directed to the distant main,
 The veering tube converts a little speck
 Into a ship full sail, dashing the brine, 75
 He recollecting shudders at the sight,
 Till turning round he sees his teacher smile,
 And reassured stoops to the magic glass.

Now will the triumph of thy plan benign
 Be proved, O Lancaster : old age and youth,
 The father and the child, will docile sit 80
 And learn their common task, the glorious power
 Of seeing thought, of seeing thought conceived
 In distant ages and distant climes ;—
 Of speaking through the storm athwart the deep.

Where scattered hovels lay, fair towns arise
 With turrets, spires, and chiming bells that call
 The crowding throngs to fill the house of prayer.
 Where erst the native plied the light canoe,
 He steers the loaded ship, no longer deep
 With human freight. Nor useful arts alone 90
 Are cherished ; music from afar is borne,

Wafted by northern gales ; and on the banks
 Of Gambia's tide the Scottish seaman starts
 To hear Lochaber's strain or Flodden field,
 Then mounts the mast to hide the bursting tear.

97

The rugged accents, gradually refined,
 Come forth a language, musical and full,
 Sonorous, gentle, forceful, rapid, bold,
 As suits the changes of the poet's lay,—
 Nor yet unpliant to a foreign strain :—
 Yes, Campbell, thy imperishable strains
 Shall live in languages but now half formed,
 And tell the slave-descended race the tale
 Of Africa restored to human rights.

100

The intellectual powers emancipate,
 Display an elasticity unknown
 To men who pace the round of polished life :
 Discovery, eagle-winged, to heaven ascends,
 And sees, beyond the ocean that now bounds
 The human ken, a world of nature's works
 Unknown and unimagined yet by man.

105

And now, ye guardians of the sacred law
 Which hails the sons of Africa as men,
 Watch lest that law promulgated by loud acclaim
 All but unanimous of Britain's sons,
 Be thwarted in its mild benignant course.
 Or, if direct attempts should not be made,

115

May not connivance, with her half-shut eyes,
 Permit the culprits to elude the law !
 May not the secret hint be understood,
 'Mark not the slave-ship ; let her shape her course
 'Unhailed, unsearched : ' and may not some who hunt
 Preferment through corruption's noisome sewers,
 Obey the covert mandate ? No, not one :
 No British seaman owns a heart so base.
 No, *Hearts of Oak*, by other ways pursue
 Preferment's meed ; the Sycophant's mean prayer
 Ne'er soils their lips ; they seek their high reward
 In voice of thunder from their wooden walls.

But truce with censure's theme. 130

O that my voice,
 To notes of praise unpractised and untuned,
 I could but modulate to lofty strains
 Of eulogy ! then would I bear record
 Of them who foremost stood in freedom's cause ; 135
 Of Benezet's enlightened early zeal ;
 The bold contempt with which the unfettered soul
 Of Sharpe arraigned the pestilent response
 Of law's high-priesthood, sanctioning an age
 Of crimes, and paralyzing mercy's hand, 140
 His dauntless arm that wielded nature's law,
 And snatched the victim from the tyrant's gripe ;
 A Clarkson's every thought, and word, and deed,

Devoted in humanity's behalf,
 His watchings, perils, toils by night and day, 145
 His life one ceaseless act of doing good ;
 The eloquence pathetic and sublime,
 And spirit undismayed, of Wilberforce,
 Erect when foiled ; the virtuous use of power
 By Grenville on the side of Justice ranged ; 150
 The fervent beam of Gloucester's royal smile ;
 The hallowed wish of Fox's dying hour,—
 Bequest most sacred to the freeman's heart,
 Bequest, though faltered with his latest breath,
 More powerful than the full careering storm 155
 Of eloquence that thundered from his tongue.

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST PART.

N. O. T. E. S.

PART I.

Note ^a line 34. *Let selfish sensibility wink hard, &c.* ‘True humanity consists not in a squeamish ear. It consists not in starting or shrinking at such tales as these, but in a disposition of heart to relieve misery. True humanity appertains rather to the mind than to the nerves, and prompts men to use real and active endeavours to execute the actions which it suggests.’ I know not who is the author of this passage. It is the quotation of a quotation from Wilberforce’s *Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, p. 38, 3d Edition.

Note ^b line 55, 56. *the treacherous flame*

That o'er the deep hushed hamlet ruin spreads.

‘The village is attacked in the night; if deemed needful, to increase the confusion, it is set on fire, and the wretched inhabitants, as they are flying naked from the flames, are seized, and carried into slavery.’ *Wilberforce’s Letter*, p. 11..

Note ^c line 115. *where he had watched*

To scare the plundering birds.

‘Abundance of little blacks of both sexes are also stolen away by their neighbours, when found abroad on the roads, or in the woods, or else in the engans, or cornfields, where they are kept all day to scare the small birds that come in swarms to feed on the millet.’ *Barbot’s Travels—Astley*. vol. ii. p. 256.

Note ^d line 174. *Surveys the human harvest reaped and bound.* ‘A battle is fought; the vanquished seldom think of rallying; the whole inhabitants become panic-struck, and *the conquerors have only to bind their slaves, and carry off their plunder and victims.*’ *Parke.*

Note ^e lines 184, 5, 6, 7, 8. *And now the wretched captives linked in rows,*

&c. ‘The Slavees are forced to keep them constantly in irons, and watch them very closely, to prevent their escape. They are commonly secured by putting the right leg of one, and the left of the other, into the same pair of fetters. By supporting the fetters with a string, they can walk, though very slowly. Every four slaves are likewise fastened together by the necks, with a strong rope of twisted thongs; and in the night, an additional pair of fetters is put on their hands, and sometimes a light iron chain passed round their necks.’ *Parke*, p. 319.

‘During this day’s travel two slaves, a woman and a girl, belonging to a Slavee of Bala, were so much fatigued, that they could not keep up with the *coffle*; they were severely whipped, and dragged along till about three o’clock in the afternoon, when they were both affected with something, by which it was discovered that they had eaten clay. This practice is by no means uncommon among the negroes, but whether it arises from a vitiated appetite, or from a settled intention to destroy themselves, I cannot affirm. *Parke*.

‘We accordingly set out together, and travelled with great expedition through the woods, until noon, when one of the Sorawelli slaves dropped the load from his head, for which he was smartly whipped. The load was replaced; but he had not proceeded above a mile before he let it fall a second time, for which he received the same punishment. After this he travelled with great pain until about two o’clock, when we stopped to breathe a little, by a pool of water the day being remarkably hot. The poor slave was now so completely exhausted, that his master was obliged to release him from the rope, for he lay motionless on the ground.

Parke, p. 346, 7.

‘During a wearisome peregrination of more than five hundred British miles, exposed to the burning rays of a tropical sun, these poor slaves, amidst their own infinitely greater sufferings, would commiserate mine; and frequently, of their own accord, bring water to quench my thirst, and at night collect branches and leaves to prepare me a bed in the wilderness.’

Parke, p. 356, 7.

PART II.

Lines 78, 79, 80, 1, 2, &c. *All hatches closed, &c.* When the scuttles are obliged to be shut, the gratings are not sufficient for airing the rooms. He (Dr. Trotter) never himself could breathe freely, unless immediately under the hatchway. He has seen the slaves drawing their breath with all those laborious and anxious efforts for life, which are observed in expiring animals, subjected by experiment to foul air, or in the exhausted receiver of an air pump. He has also seen them, when the tarpawlings have been inadvertently thrown over the gratings, attempting to heave them up, crying out in their own language, "We are dying." On removing the tarpawlings and gratings, they would fly to the hatchway, with all the signs of terror and dread of suffocation. Many of them he has seen in a dying state, but some have recovered by being brought hither, or on the deck; others were irrecoverably lost by suffocation, having had no previous signs of indisposition.

Nearly the same accounts, as the above, are given by Messrs. Falconbridge, Wilson, Claxton, Morley, Town, and Hall. The slaves are described as dejected when brought on board; as having not so much room as a man in his coffin; as being in a violent perspiration or dew sweat; as complaining of heat; as fainting in consequence of it; and as going below at night apparently well, but found dead in the morning.

Abridgment of the Evidence taken before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, in 1790 and 1791, p. 11.

Note - line 83. *Disease bursts forth, &c.* Such are the scenes going on in the slave vessels, from the time of the receipt of the slaves on board, to that of their arrival in their destined ports; during which time it may be supposed that a considerable loss, from mortality and suicide, has taken place.

The different evidences have given an account of this loss for their own voyages, as far as they could recollect it. The total number purchased appears to be 7904, and of the lost 2053. Hence more than a fourth perished.

The causes of the above mortality are described by Mr. Falconbridge to be sudden transitions from heat to cold, a putrid atmosphere, wallowing in their own excrements, and being shackled together, but particularly to a diseased mind: to thinking so much of their situation, says another; to melancholy, says a third; and to grief, says a fourth, for being carried away from their friends and country. *Abstract of the Evidence, &c.*

Note lines 118, 119, 120, &c. *Some, on death resolved,*

All sustenance refuse; then creaks the screw-

Of torture, &c.

Others determine to destroy themselves, but effect their purpose in different ways.

Of these, some refuse sustenance and die. In the ships of surgeons Falconbridge, Wilson, and Trotter, and of Messrs. Millar and Town, are instances of their starving themselves to death. In all these they were compelled, some by whipping, and others by the thumb-screw, and other means, to take their food, but all punishment was ineffectual; they were determined to die. In the very act of chastisement, Mr. Wilson says, they have looked up at him, and said, with a smile, "Presently we shall be no more." *Abstract of the Evidence &c.*

Line 181. *And let the trenching scourge, &c.* Flogging did not commence with us till about the latitude 28°. It was talked of long before, but was withheld by the above-mentioned consideration. It no sooner made its appearance but it spread like a contagion. Wantonness, misconception, and ignorance, inflicted it without an appearance of remorse, and without fear of being answerable for the abuse of authority. This barbarous charge to the officers I myself heard given—" You are now in a Guinea ship—no ' seaman, though you speak harshly, must dare to give you a saucy answer—' that is out of the question; but if they *look* to displease you, knock them ' down." *Stanfield's Letters. Appendix to his poem entitled the Guinea Voyage.*

Line 190. *Is this the nursery, &c.* The vessel, as Mr. Falconbridge aptly and emphatically observes, was like a slaughter-house—blood, filth, misery, and disease. The chief mate lay dying, calling out for that comfort and assistance he had so often denied to others. He was glad to lay hold of me to bring him a little refreshment—no one else to take the smallest notice of his cries. The doctor was in the same condition, and making the same complaint. The second mate was lying on his back on the medicine-chest; his head hanging down over one end of it, his hair sweeping the deck, and

clotted with that was collected there; and in this unnoticed situation he died soon after I came on board.

On the poop the appearance was still more shocking—the remainder of the ship's crew stretched in the last stage of their sickness, without comfort, without refreshment, without attendance. There they lay, straining their weak voices with the most lamentable cries for a little water, and not a soul to afford them the smallest relief.

The chief mate, whom we brought off the coast, died soon; the second mate soon after: their united duties devolved upon me. While the latter was in his illness, he got up one night, made a noise, tumbled some things about the half-deck, untied a hammock, and played some other delirious but innocent tricks. The captain, being a little recovered at that time, came out, and knocked him down. I do not at this time remember the weapon, but I know his head was sadly cut, and bleeding—in short he was beat in a most dreadful manner; and, before the morning, he was dead. This man had not been many weeks on the coast, and left it in remarkably good health.

PART III.

Line 21. *Kneel to the hardened purchaser and clasp
His knees in agony, &c.*

'Observing their extreme agitation, I was led particularly to notice their conduct, as influenced by the terror of being torn from each other, and I may truly say, that I witnessed a just and faithful representation of *the distressed mother!* and such as might bid defiance even to the all-imitative powers of a Siddons! for the fears of the parent, lest she should be separated from her children, or these from each other, were anxious and watchful beyond all that imagination could paint, or the most vivid fancy pourtray. When any one approached their little group, or chanced to look towards them with the attentive eye of a purchaser, the children, in broken sobs, crouched nearer together, and the tearful mother, in agonizing impulse, instantly fell down before the spectator, bowed herself to the earth, and kissed his feet; then, alternately clinging to his legs, and pressing her children to her bosom, she fixed herself upon her knees, clasped her hands toge-

ther, and, in anguish, cast up a look of humble petition, which might have found its way even to the heart of a Caligula!—and, thus, in Nature's truest language, did the afflicted parent urge the strongest appeal to his compassion, while she implored the purchaser, in dealing out to her the hard lot of slavery, to spare her the additional pang of being torn from her children;—to forbear exposing her to the accumulated agonies which would result from forcing those asunder, whom the all-wise disposer of events had bound together by the most sacred ties of nature and affection. *Pinckard's Notes on the West Indies, Vol. III. p. 357.*

Line 35. *all must ply an equal task,*
Without regard to age or strength or sex.

But a nearer and more particular view of the manner of working may be necessary to those who have never seen a gang of Negroes at their work:

' When employed in the labour of the field, as, for example, in *holing a cane piece*, i. e. in turning up the ground with hoes into parallel trenches, ' for the reception of the cane plants, the Slaves of both sexes, from twenty, ' perhaps, to four score in number, are drawn out in a line, like troops on a pa- ' rade, each with a hoe in his hand; and close to them in the rear is stationed a ' driver, or several drivers, in numbers duly proportioned to that of the gang. ' Each of these drivers, who are always the most active and vigorous Ne- ' groes on the estate, has in his hand, or coiled round his neck, from which ' by extending the handle it can be disengaged in a moment, a long, thick, ' and strongly platted whip, called a *cart whip*, the report of which is as loud, ' and the lash as severe, as those of the whips in common use with our wag- ' goners, and which he has authority to apply at the instant when his eye ' perceives an occasion, without any previous warning. Thus disposed, their ' work begins, and continues without interruption for a certain number of ' hours, during which, at the peril of the drivers, an adequate portion of ' land must be holed.

' As the trenches (continues our Author) are generally rectilinear, and the ' whole line of holers advance together, it is necessary that every hole or ' section of the trench should be finished in equal time with the rest; and if ' any one or more Negroes were allowed to throw in the hoe with less rapi- ' dity or energy than their companions in other parts of the line, it is ob- ' vious that the work of the latter must be suspended; or else, such part of ' the trench as is passed over by the former, will be more imperfectly formed ' than the rest. It is therefore the business of the drivers not only to urge

' forward the whole gang with sufficient speed, but sedulously to watch that all in the line, whether male or female, old or young, strong or feeble, work as nearly as possible in equal time, and with equal effect. The tardy stroke must be quickened, and the languid invigorated, and the whole line made to *dress*, in the military phrase, as it advances. No breathing time, no resting on the hoe, no pause of languor, to be repaid by brisker exertion on return to work, can be allowed to individuals: all must work, or pause together.' *Wilberforce's Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, 3d Edit. p. 66.

Line 47, 48. his shrieks

Heard in the festive hall, &c.

'The corporal punishment of slaves is so frequent, that instead of exciting the repugnant sensations, felt by Europeans on first witnessing it, scarcely does it produce, in the breasts of those long accustomed to the West Indies, even the slightest feeling of compassion. The lady I have above alluded to appears of good natural disposition, and in no degree disposed to general cruelty; but the frequency of the sight has rendered her callous to its common influence upon the feelings. Being one morning at her house, while sitting in conversation, we suddenly heard the loud cries of a negro suffering under the whip. Mrs.—— expressed surprise on observing me shudder at his shrieks, and you will believe that I was in utter astonishment to find her treat his sufferings as matter of amusement. It proved that the punishment proceeded from the arm of the lady's husband, and fell upon one of her own slaves; and, can you believe that on learning this, she exclaimed with a broad smile, 'Aha! it will do him good! a little wholesome flagellation will refresh him.—It will sober him.—It will open his skin, and make him alert. If Y— was to give it them all, it would be of service to them!'

'I could not compliment the lady upon her humanity. The loud clang of the whip continued, and the poor imploring negro as loudly cried, 'Oh Massa, Massa—God a'mighty—God bless you Massa! I beg you pardon! Oh! Massa, Oh! I beg you pardon! Oh! God a'mighty—God bless you!'—Still the whip sounded aloud, and still the lady cried 'Aye, it's very necessary!' *Pinckard's Notes on the West Indies*, Vol. II. p. 192.

'As for the punishments of Owners, when General T. saw the shameless and cruel flogging, on the public parade, of two very decent women, who, while waiting at table where he was visiting, had been ordered by their mistress, in spite of his expostulations, to go with the jumper (or public flogger,) to receive a dozen, each stroke of which brought flesh with them, we do not

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that that the incident excited any surprise or attention in any one but the General himself? If such could be the treatment sanctioned by public opinion, and general feeling, of decent young women, publicly and in the face of day, what consideration would be likely to be paid to the comforts and feelings of the field Negroes, who are regarded as a far inferior race to the domestics, especially when there are no officious bystanders to witness what may take place?" *Wilberforce's Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, 3d Edit. p. 68.

Line 60. *What horrid cries unlike aught earthly, &c.* 'A gentleman (Mr. Ross, as appeared in evidence), while he was walking along heard the shrieks of a female, issuing from a barn or outhouse: and as they were much too violent to be excited by ordinary punishment, he was prompted to go near and see what could be the matter. On looking in he perceived a young female had up to a beam by her wrists entirely naked, and in the act of involuntary writhing and swinging, while the author of her torture was standing below her with a lighted torch in his hand, which he applied to all parts of her body, as it approached him.' Fox's speech from report of the debate, on a motion for the abolition of the Slave Trade, on the 18th and 19th of April, 1791.

Line 98. *The bondman's dwelling passes o'er untouched.* 'But though the mind be naturally led to the Africans, as the greatest sufferers, yet, unless the Scripture be a forgery, it is not their cause only that I am pleading, but the cause of my Country. Yet let me not here be misconceived. It is not that I expect any visible and supernatural effects of the Divine vengeance; though, not to listen with seriousness to the accounts which have been brought us of late years from the Western hemisphere, as to a probable intimation of the Divine displeasure, would be to resolve to shut our ears against the warning voice of Providence. To mention no other particulars, a disease new in its kind, and almost without example destructive in its ravages, has been for some time raging in those very colonies which are the chief supporters of the traffic in human beings; a disease concerning which we scarcely know any thing, but that it does not affect the Negro race, and that we first heard of it after the horrors of the Slave Trade had been completely developed in the House of Commons, but developed in vain.' *Wilberforce's Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, 3d Edit. p. 163.

* Vide evidence of General Tottenham, taken before the Committee of the House of Commons.

A POEM,

OCCASIONED BY THE

ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE,

IN 1806.

By E. BENGER.

THE ARGUMENT.

Invocation to Granville Sharpe, as the Negro's advocate.—The abolition considered as a subject of patriotic exultation.—The glory of the British nation shewn to be founded on the dignity of its civil and political character.—The original superiority of the British character, derived from the purity and equity of its laws.—The toleration of slavery incompatible with those laws.—Description of an unprotected Negro—prior to the establishment of the principle that in England the slave becomes free.—Granville Sharpe, the father of the African cause.

—Comparison of moral and physical evils.—The Negro shewn to have succeeded to the captivity imposed by Europeans on the natives of the New World.—Address to Africa—with reference to its long subjection to a foreign yoke—Of the primitive slavery in Africa.—Difference between domestic slaves and captives.—Description of a captive's escape and return to his native country.—Banishment, the most terrible of calamities to the Negro—his strong local attachments—his habitation and modes of life.—The Bentang, the tree sacred to hospitality.—Kindness to stangers—recreations of an African evening—character and story of Mensong, his probable reception among his countrymen—address to Africa—in reference to the prospect of amelioration opened by the Abolition—the type of a traveller in the desert.—Benefits flowing from the Abolition to the common interests of humanity.—Disgraceful motives of opposition to the Abolition.—The true source of national greatness, traced to virtue rather than commerce—commerce no substitute for public spirit—exemplified in the rise and declension of Holland.—The Abolition not unfavourable to the Commercial interest—Probable progression of society in Africa.—Of the rude civilization common to all nations in their infancy.—The superstitious terrors of the Roman mariners contrasted with the confidence and skill of British navigators.—The Roman galley.—The British ship.—The happy progress of truth exhibited in the diffusion of knowledge and science.—The love of truth productive of dignity to the moral character.—Blessings diffused by the gospel.—Digression to Clarkson, a tribute to his philanthropy.

A P O E M,

8c.

Thou, who didst once the desolate defend,
(The captive's guardian, and the freeman's friend,) 5
Who long hast mourn'd the wrongs that Afric bore ;
Mourn'd as a man, but as a patriot more,
Whilst Britain to Oppression lent her name,
Partook the plunder, and engross'd the shame,
Benignant Sharpe ! to thee these lays I bear,
Thee, not unwont the stranger's call to hear ;
Thee, ne'er averse the suppliant's plea to own,
Propitious patron of the *Poor* unknown !— 10
To me, though rigid fate forbade to share
Thy glorious toils—the honourable care,
Meet for the brave, the mighty, and the wise !
Though far from thine my lonely orbit lies,
So far that mem'ry boasts of thee no trace, 15
Whilst fancy forms the visionary face ;
Yet by that gracious act, which well repays
Thy task of care, thy life of dull delays,
Which bids the gen'rous strife of virtue cease,
And breathes o'er Africa the balm of peace ; 20

I hail thee, conscious of one kindred claim,—
 Exulting, hail thee in a Briton's name,
 And feel my soul with filial love expand
 To this lov'd isle—the cherish'd parent land ;
 Whose sacred spirit drew thy virtues forth, 25.
 Thy genius warm'd, matur'd thy growing worth,
 Stamped her own image on thy spotless mind,
 And rais'd in thee a friend to all mankind.

Lo, Britain reigns a queen! with proud control,
 O'er distant realms she sweeps her royal stole ; 30.
 The vassal isles her beck'ning hand obey,
 Rude ocean owns her tutelary sway ;
 The gold of Afric at her feet is spread,
 And Asia's jewell'd pomp invests her head.
 Yet not for this the patriot's latest prayer 35.
 To heaven is breath'd, his chosen isle to spare ;
 His hallow'd pride from purer sources flows,
 And nobler triumph in his bosom glows.—
 Time was, that Britain to no distant land
 Her mandate breath'd, or stretch'd her sceptral wand ; 40
 ‘Enskied and pure,’* within her own domain
 She dwelt, unsullied by the world profane—
 A vestal isle—and through the tedious night
 Nurs'd freedom's flame, and watch'd the lonely light.

* ‘I hold you as a thing enskied and sainted.’ Shakespear.

Who crush'd the iron arm of feudal power ? 45
 Who chas'd the tyrant from his moated tower ?
 Subdu'd the mighty, succour'd the opprest ?
 Gen'rous as brave ! beneficent as blest ?
 Britain, was she ! such deeds in days of old,
 Her bards have blazon'd, and her laws enroll'd.— 50
 Hers is the realm (and, oh ! to latest time,
 May truth proclaim it, of the favour'd clime,)
 Where springs no tyrant, on his helpless prey,
 And Pride is guiltless of despotic sway ;
 Vengeance is mute, and wild ambition tame, 55
 Nor vice by splendour sanctified from shame ;
 For Justice here, in hospitable state,
 Her vigil keeps before the open gate,
 Nor fawns on nobles, nor to princes bends,
 But guards the houseless head, that none befriends. 60
 Yet to this isle, beneficent as blest,
 Truth's sacred haunt, and freedom's shelter'd rest,
 By fraudulent wiles, the demon Av'rice bore,
 A monster-form, distain'd with human gore ;
 Whose tainted breath a cloud of darkness cast, 65
 Whilst grim oppression swell'd the boding blast.
 The patriot sigh'd, indignant, and dismay'd,
 For martyr'd piety—and faith betray'd ;
 For man, in slavery's abject form disgrac'd,
 For man, yet most by brutal might debas'd, 70

For captive Africa, who wept in dust!
 For Britain, treach'rous to her plighted trust!
 Yes, there was one, unmeasur'd in his woe,
 Poorer than penury, supremely low,
 Bereft of all that nature leaves to cheer } 75
 The beggar's want, or dry the orphan's tear,
 A wretch to hope estrang'd, but ne'er redeem'd from fear.
 That blasted man was Afric's exil'd son,
 Wreck'd on each coast, in ev'ry realm undone.^b
 For him no boons had charity assign'd, } 80
 Rude was each soil, the balmiest breath unkind;
 Cruel each clime—no land adoption gave,
 No Sov'reign reach'd his sceptre to the *slave*.
 Till thou, oh! Sharpe, didst launch the gallant oar,
 And bear him to the hospitable shore— } 85
 Friend to the wretched! once his only guide,
 Now raise thine eyes with patriarchal pride;
 Thy gen'rous children in his champions trace,
 Bless, fondly bless, the wide encircling race;
 See future sons, in ages far from thine, } 90
 Champions of truth, the guard of Honour's shrine.
 To distant climes see Britain's bounty run,
 Whilst Virtue's triumph and her own are one.
 In this our human world, this goodly frame } 95
 Of life, directed to immortal aim;

All ages one ungrateful truth attest,
 That man is most by brother man opprest.
 If distant nations breathe the kindred sigh,
 If mis'ry form for all a common tie;
 What hand has wrought the universal chain,
 But man's, the great artificer of pain ?
 From this terrestrial soil some ills arise,
 Faint types of those his fatal art supplies.
 What though the glebe should fail—the floods o'erleap
 Their ancient bourn—the swift-wing'd whirlwind sweep
 O'er the sweet fields that bask in summer's bloom !— 106
 Should parent earth her living sons entomb,—
 The vital gales diffuse a tainted breath,
 And change the city to the den of death ?
 Man from these sources draws the stream along, 110
 Crimes mock calamity, woe springs from wrong ;
 The passions are his elements; his will
 Directs their force, omnipotent in ill !
 See war, arch-engine of his ruthless power,
 In gathering clouds the hostile legions lower ; 115
 These, where they move, fair nature's face deform,
 Swift as the lightning, ruder than the storm ;
 By these fierce flames the tranquil deep invade,
 The springing field lies wither'd in the blade ;
 From earth to heaven the thunder's shock ascends, 120
 The mountain groans—the aged forest bends ;

'The Furies issue from their loath'd abode,
And wildly darken Desolation's road.
But has the havoc ceas'd? its wrecks remain,
Victors, and vanquish'd, favour'd most the slain. 130
By man's conscription, in how brief a space
All woes conspire to curse the human race!
Nature and passion cruel conflict wage,
Here want, there rapine, pestilence, and rage—
The tortur'd frame—the anguish unappeas'd,
Ambition's martyr'd will—the soul diseas'd— 135
These haunt the tents; and last, in lonely state,
Remote from all, supremest curse of fate,
Comes hard Captivity; stern grief, that bears
No kindly fellowship with human tears. 140

All human archives in this truth accord,
That feeble man is Ruin's mighty Lord;
States rise and fall as ages roll away,
But vice survives, the passions ne'er decay;
New tyrants start, where conquest once has been, 145
The drama constant, tho' transposed the scene.
Thus in those isles where, gazing with delight,^b
Columbus first repos'd his aching sight;
(Ere yet, his swan-white sails that beauteous land
Approach'd; the younger world of nature's hand;) 150
On the same sod, where (Rapine's helpless prey,)
The plumed Indian, pin'd his life away,



Vide Page 32.

Enslav'd, degraded, doom'd to vile employ,
 Deploring still the rifled hive of joy,
 There the poor Negro, shackled with the chain, 155
 Rears, by his sweltering toil, the nectar'd cane ;
 And, wretched exile from his brighter skies,
 Breathes o'er the native's grave complaining sighs,
 Unconscious on what dust he treads, nor knows
 Whose place he takes, whose heritage of woes. 160
 But not like him, the captive Indian pin'd,
 Some gentler feelings sooth'd his simple mind ;
 Still might the patriarch to his children trace
 His ancient home—his desolated place,—
 And to familiar brethren still impart, 165
 In native speech, the sorrows of his heart—
 But Afric's outcast meets no kindred hand,
 He mourns unsolac'd in a foreign land ;
 To him the heavens a fearful aspect wear,
 Strange are the accents murmur'd in his ear, 170
 He steals no balm from pity's lenient breath,
 Hope sheds no gleam but thro' the vale of death :
 An alien, far from nature's bosom cast,
 He broods on wrongs, the present and the past ;
 And asks what vengeance shall the wretches wait, 175
 Who bade him mourn within the stranger's gate.
 Devoted victim of the crimes accurst,
 By hatred cherish'd, and by av'rice nurs'd ;

Crimes that with Europe's sordid sons began,
The rude barbarian's gift from polish'd man.

180

Ne'er through the ancient calendar of time,
Has churlish winter visited thy clime,
Thou land of Afric ! from creation's birth,
The keen-ey'd archer spares thy teeming earth,
Nor smites thy fields, nor lays thy foliage low,
Nor stills the living waters as they flow—
Region of life and verdure ! happy soil,
Of boon fertility, untask'd to toil ;
Why comes not gracious peace thy fields to dress,
To crown the harvest, and the pasture bless ?
No power shall bless the land to spoil a prey,
The slave of slaves, condemn'd to vassal sway !
The rude reproach of other nations made,
Spurn'd by the mighty, by the base betray'd—
Daughter of Afric ! thee no arts adorn,
Thy school was *suffering*, and thy teacher *scorn* ;
Thine was the orphan's desolated state,
The strife of rapine, and the curse of hate ;
Woe was thy portion, by oppression seal'd !
Wrongs unreveng'd, dishonour unrepeal'd :
Who should protect thee ? thou wast poor and low,
And unresisting to thy mighty foe.
Lo, type of thee, where India's wretched hind,
The Paria, lives, to wrath and want consign'd ;*

185

190

195

200

None looks but loaths ; in vain his asking eye 205
 Is rais'd from earth ; none heeds his plaintive sigh.

At nature's bounteous feast alone unblest,
 He stands a suppliant, unacknowledg'd guest ;
 From sweet humanity's communion driven,
 The joys of earth, the blessed hopes of heaven. 210

In realms remote where antient Niger flows,
 'Mid woods still lock'd in nature's deep repose ;
 Where none has furl'd the sail—the vent'rous oar
 Has ne'er resounded from the sylvan shore ;
 E'en there corruption's baneful germ is sown, 215
 Rude though the soil, to Europe's arts unknown.

By treach'rous strangers pledg'd, the fatal bowl
 Arous'd the furies in the sleeping soul :

Man rush'd on man, as av'rice urged the strife,
 Remorseless rapine spared the victim's life ; 220
 But, doom'd in foreign climes to draw his breath,
 He loathes the boon, and mourns his living death.

Ere Europe's spirit to this region spread,
 Fraud, and distrust, and cruelty, and dread,
 Had slavery long her peaceful dwelling made 225
 Beneath the ancient patriarchal shade :
 No monster here, but native to the clime,
 Rude, not unkind, she reigns unstain'd by crime ;
 Nor hard rebukes, nor cruel stripes await
 The bondsman born within the master's gate. 230

(He serves no pamper'd tyrant, form'd to crave,
 Rapacious prodigal, luxurious slave.)
 Beside his lord the common task he plies,
 Drinks of his bowl; within his threshold lies;
 And social toil still crown'd with friendly rest, 235
 He lives his tenant, and he dies his guest.

But he who vainly drew the warrior's bow,
 And prostrate fell before the haughty foe,
 Him vengeance dooms to outrage and disgrace,
 Spurn'd for himself, detested for his race— 240

In silent grief he bears the galling chain,
 His sighs unpitied, and unsooth'd his pain.
 Yet even he still breathes his secret prayer,
 Hope leaves him not—he still resists despair.

Though distant far his native village lies, 245
 No ocean rolls between, or tempests rise;
 And oft his soul revolves the bold design,

(Whilst fancy measures back the devious line,)

Far through the woods his chartless path to trace,
 And press through peril to his home's embrace; 250
 Hope leaves him not, and in his midnight dream,
 Again he tastes of that delicious stream

Which through his native vale translucent flows;

Again his own coeval palm he knows;

Through the rude hamlet's mist of smoke ascends, 255
 And breathes (how lightly!) in the clime of friends.

And is he blest? he doubts—in griev'd amaze
 His eyes unclose—Ah!—not on friends to gaze.
 From earth he springs with wild convulsive start—
 But still the dream of bliss inflames his heart; 260
 In strength sublime he lifts the fetter'd arm,
 And sunders bondage from his manly form—
 And is he free? with swiftly silent tread,
 Soft as a shadow, glides he from the shed :
 'Tis hope—'tis fear—no bounds his course restrain, 265
 Strong as a torrent rolling o'er the plain—
 He chafes the flood—he climbs the mountain steep,—
 Nor trembles o'er the dun abyss to leap—
 With dauntless step disturbs the serpent's brood,
 And, spurning caution, plucks the berried food ; 270
 But when night's shadow o'er the forest falls,
 And ev'ry breath the lonely man appals,
 From the bruis'd reed he draws the latent fire,
 And forms of grassy heaps the blazing pyre.
 The sudden splendour flashes through the glen, 275
 The startled lion seeks his gloomy den ;
 The keen-ey'd tiger, scouring for his prey,
 Turns from the lurid light in fierce dismay :
 Whilst shrieks of death approach the wanderer's ear,
 Who keeps with drowsy lid, the watch of fear, 280
 And still sits cow'ring o'er the ruddy blaze,
 Till pale it fades beneath the morning's rays;

But when, at length, each toil, each danger past,
 He faintly views his native hills at last,
 Though drooping now, and sickening with delay, 225
 His eyes wax dim, his being melts away;
 Yet, yet, he urges on his faltering feet,
 His spirit guides him to his wonted seat:
 The stream, the tree, in vision imag'd late,
 He now beholds, his father's open gate— 290
 Lifts to the humble roof his closing eyes,
 Drops on the threshold, gazes, whispers, dies.—
 Enough for him with kindred clay to rest*
 On the same sod his foot in childhood prest;
 'Mid living friends, still cherish'd, to consume, 295
 His former home the guardian of his tomb!

The simple Negro bears with cold disdain
 Of climes far distant from his native plain;
 He asks no fairer regions to behold,
 Asks but to linger in his kindred fold: 300
 Till, blanch'd by time, his few spare locks engage
 The sacred rev'rence youth bequeaths to age!—
 Child of tradition! all his soul requires
 Is bounded by the mem'ry of his sires:
 Like them he sallies on the ambush'd foe, 305
 Like them arrests with his unerring bow
 The nimble lizard, though he lightly springs,
 Green as the pensile leaf to which he clings;

Or, like a tempest, drives the woods among,
 With skill that tames the fierce, and awes the strong ;
 Or, hov'ring o'er the river's banks of green, 311
 Extends the filmy mesh that snares unseen.
 And well he knows, (as erst his fathers knew,)
 To fence his borders with the neat bamboo,
 To raise the raft of reeds, the walls of loam, 315
 To form partitions in his little home,
 Cell within cell, (like chambers of the comb)
 And spread the grassy roof that breathes perfume.
 The social door, that latch or bar has none,
 The western zephyr woes, and ev'ning sun ; 320
 That porch is sacred—where with cautious tread
 The master stoops his unambitious head ;
 But, enter'd once, sleeps reckless of alarm,
 Rock'd, like the nautilus, amid the storm
 That rages round his shell—no winds invade 325
 The lowly lodge—the Tamarind's guardian shade,
 Whose ever-sheltering arms around are spread,
 Rebukes the lightning from his humble shed.
 But not alone those friendly branches wave
 To screen his home, they mark his future grave ; 330
 For near that cherish'd spot, at parting day,
 He deems some friend his lifeless corse shall lay;
 Clad in such garb as erst his hands had wrought,
 (A task perchance perform'd in pensive thought,)*

White as the silk-worm's soft funereal vest, 335
 The little artists' destin'd cell of rest ;
 When, haply reckless of his future doom,
 He shrouds his tender frame and decks his tomb.
 Yet Afric's humble son is doom'd to share
 The common lot of toil, and want, and care; 340
 And pride, and wrath, and emulation reach
 His feeling soul, though simple as his speech.
 His world is measur'd by the narrow space
 Within the Bentang's venerable place;^h
 From youth to age, his foot imprints its floor, 345
 Rais'd but on reeds—the school of civil lore ;
 The seat of justice, in unsceptred state ;
 The scene of all he deems august and great,
 Where law is breath'd as simple sense inspires,
 Or oral truth, the spirit of his sires.— 350
 Here too, when evening's grateful zephyr blows,
 The tale is caroll'd, or the legend flows.
 (So well loves man, his daily cares resign'd,
 To fill with dreams perturb'd the vacant mind :)
 Whilst the cool Tabba's beach-like shade descends 355
 O'er sires and sons, a family of friends.
 Nor vainly here the wanderer seeks a seat,
 But drops the sandals from his bleeding feet—
 Hail'd though unknown—to simple man what claim?
 So strong, so sacred, as the stranger's name? 360

Hard is his lot, to pining want a prey,
 No friend he meets, his home is far away.
 Cruel his fate, a lonely course to steer,
 Where doubt is dread, and peril follows fear ;
 Thus feels the matron whilst his feet she laves, 365
 Or yields from stinted stores the boon he craves ;
 And, when he leaves her hospitable gate,
 She softly sighs, ‘ Let peace thy steps await ;
 Mayst thou yet gladden her who gave thee birth,
 And sit rejoicing on thy native hearth ! ’ 370

Is there a spell the Negro’s soul to wean
 From childhood’s lov’d traditionary scene ?
 No—long estrang’d, through slow revolving years,
 The exile pours his unexhausted tears :
 E’en he, the favour’d man, from thraldom free, 375

Yearns to behold his tutelary tree,
 And those dear hills by summer ever blest,
 Where the great spirit makes his hallow’d rest.^k
 ’Twas this o’erruling impulse of the mind
 The passion cherish’d first, and last resign’d,
 That hence the gentle, gen’rous Mansong drew,
 Though loth, to England’s isle to bid adieu ;
 Loth, from the gracious friends he lov’d to part,
 The faithful inmates of his honest heart :
 But still his spirit hover’d o’er the coast, 380
 In fancy trac’d the spot first lov’d, and most.

365

370

375

380

385

But still for nature's brotherhood he pin'd,
 The dear communion, frank, familiar, kind ;
 Of equal mates, and from his rest again
 Adventur'd gladly on the stormy main— 390
 Yet not for parted joys he sought his clime,—
 (With sorrow furrow'd ere matur'd by time :)
 Dark were the scenes his mem'ry there could trace—
 And few the days, a brief but evil race.
 Scarce could his little hands the shuttle ply 393
 When his heart caught his mother's boding sigh.
 The annual fires had blazed—that joyous rite,
 For ever grateful to the cultor's sight ;
 When, happy symbol of the harvest's close,
 Burns the green turf, each hill, each valley glows, 400
 The mountain smokes, the lightning darts through air,
 Along the serpent's nest, or lion's lair;
 The welkin reddens, and the clouds of night
 Roll, 'mid the stars diffusing orient light.
 The annual fires had blaz'd; and from his shed, 405
 Gaunt with his spear, each hunter boldly sped
 With joy, the pure embalmed air to taste,
 To wield the ample limbs by vigour brac'd.
 Morn after morn to urge the sylvan chase,
 Through tracks of sand, the lion's prints to trace; 410
 Or deep in woods, to chant the raise of mirth,
 Rejoicing blithly o'er the new-clothed earth.—

The sprightly troops with shouts of joyance past
 The village town; but soon a ruder blast
 Arose, amid the neighbouring forest's shade; 415
 The hostile spear was there in ambush laid.—
 Man rush'd on man, impatient for the spoil,
 And human blood bedew'd the fertile soil;
 The village band prevail'd, the wily foe
 Retir'd; but where was he whose gallant bow 420
 Had foil'd the danger, and the triumph won?
 Praise hail'd him not, his earthly race was run.
 Now borne, unconscious, to the widow'd hearth,
 Whence, warm with hope, he lately wended forth.
 All mourn'd who saw—the child was taught to know 425
 Man's fate, to feel the fellowship of woe.
 Then, Mansong caught his mother's boding sighs,
 Then rais'd his voice, responsive to her cries;
 And, whilst he wept, his little service gave
 To plant some shrubs beside his father's grave.— 430
 Full fraught with ills was that funereal year,^m
 The curse of famine, and the scourge of fear.
 Unhappy they, whose bridal web was dress'd,
 The birth was joyless, and the babe unblest;
 Supine and silent, at her lonely door 435
 The widow'd Nealie sate, her wheel no more
 She turn'd, no more prepar'd the milky bowl,
 And chill despondence press'd upon her soul.—

Is hope consum'd, is no deliverer nigh ?
 And must the mother, or her offspring die ? 440
 We let one son the bondsman's fate embrace,
 To ward destruction from his hopeless race.—
 Yet now hard task remains, on whom to bind
 The gyve of servitude, the pledge unkind ;
 Not him, her elder hope, her youthful guide, 445
 Who wields his father's bow with manly pride ;
 Nor him, who in her sorrow bears no part,
 Sweet parasite, entwin'd around her heart ;
 The babe, who blest in nature's bounty made,
 Still woes to wonted sports so long delay'd.— 450
 On Mansong then a wistful glance she cast,
 He most had murmur'd at the hideous fast.
 But now an awful silence seal'd his tongue,
 Sleep's heavy dew upon his eyelids hung ;
 Rous'd by his mother's voice, he rose to hear 455
 His doom, unmov'd by tenderness or fear,
 Nor griev'd, as feebly on her arm reclin'd,
 His home he left, nor turn'd to gaze behind ;
 Nor wept, when Nealie with a desperate joy
 Receiv'd the purchase of her lovely boy ; 460
 When wing'd with hope, yet still distrusting fate,
 Back to her home she bore the precious freight,
 And minister'd of life, ah ! haply not too late.. }



R. Smith, R.A. Sculpsit

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Washington Junct.

Vide Page 123.

Full fraught with ills was that funereal year ;
 By rapine led, the sordid foe drew near ; 465
 The smoking village vanish'd from the plain,
 The strong were captur'd, and the feeble slain.
 Far thence the ruthless spoiler dragg'd his prey,
 Condemn'd to distant climes and foreign sway :
 And Mansong, 'mid the desolated train, 470
 A mother hail'd, a brother found again.—
 Rough was the path the weary wand'lers trac'd,
 O'er burning sands, a bare unwater'd waste ;
 No sower here had dropt the bounteous grain,
 For man to brutes resign'd the rude domain.— 475
 Yet Nealie liv'd, and yet with fervent pray'r,
 Implor'd of heaven her drooping babe to spare ;
 That dying babe more fondly still she prest,
 Till clos'd its weary'd lids in mortal rest.
 But when the mother's tender charge was o'er, 480
 And breath'd that little form of life no more,
 On earth she sunk, but never thence to rise,
 To spend her grief in unavailing cries.
 Here would she rest, though near her shadeless seat
 She mark'd the traces of the lion's feet ; 485
 Around her limbs the shroud-like garb she spread,
 And meekly bow'd her unprotected head.
 Oh ! thou whose tears full soon were taught to flow,
 Thou, gen'rous Mansong ! nurtur'd long in woe ;

Not e'en the spirit of thy sires may heal 490
 These deepest wounds thy heart was doom'd to feel.
 Still shall the floating prison's poison'd breath,
 The parting, keener than the pangs of death,
 When, rudely sunder'd from thy brother's hand,
 The stranger spurn'd thee in a foreign land; 495
 Still shall these dreams thy mem'ry oft invade,
 And cast on living scenes their pensive shade;
 Whilst Nealie's image in thy filial breast
 Awakes the grief that shuns unhallow'd rest.
 Oh! long advent'rous, hast thou found at last 500
 A native home, to sooth thee for the past,
 Or dost thou still, a wand'ring man, explore
 Realms far remote from Gambia's sedgy shore?
 Does pleasure still thy pilgrim course await?
 Is fame thy herald at the rustic gate? 505
 Or how thy brethren to their native sage,
 The lonely *star*, the Thales of their age?
 With varied arts and powers stupendous fraught,
 Far, far beyond their little scope of thought;
 Who first and only of the simple race, 510
 Has known the magic characters to trace;
 Whose high unequall'd skill avails to form,
 The Safie potent for each human harm;
 The warrior's shield, the wanderer's mystic chart,
 Compass and guide of the believing heart. 515

Mansong, methinks, to some rude walls convey'd,
I see thee now, the welcome wonder made.

Forth swarms the village, whilst with joy elate,
The chief conducts thee to the lowly gate :

The gath'ring crowds thy ling'ring steps pursue, 520
Rais'd is the roof that hides thee from their view ;
The young, the old, surround the wattled shed,
Like locusts o'er the taper'd lotus spread.

For thee the pastur'd steer is doom'd to bleed,
The feast is spread, and freely flows the mead, 525
The minstrel tunes his harp of many strings,

The Korro sweeps responsive, whilst he sings :
But when some tale uncouth, in fluent strains,
He chants, as mem'ry prompts or fancy feigns,
Lo ! from thy rushy seat I see thee rise, 530

Thy soul's impatience kindling in thine eyes,
Whilst from thy lips with all-persuasive truth
Flows the sad legend of thy suffering youth.

Hast thou not voyaged on the stormy wave ?

By strangers scourg'd, an outcast—and a slave ? 535

(The warrior glances on his battle spear,
Her babe the mother clasps, with tender fear.)

Didst thou not drain the cup of woe alone ?

To grieve—to breathe unpity'd misery's moan ?

E'en he, the captive who with brow severe 540
Seems not the circle's choral call to hear ;

E'en he relenting bends in earnest gaze,
 And wretch himself, the dole of pity pays.
 Then, whilst each soul with gen'rous passion glows,
 And ev'ry eye with tender grief o'erflows; 545
 Oh ! bid them to thy captive brother turn,
 (That man of sorrows doom'd like thee to mourn);
 From strangers learn to grant the kind release,
 And, like the white man, bid oppression cease.

Prophet of good, direct thy nation's view 550
 To dearer blessings than their fathers knew ;
 Teach the rude sylvan warriors to explore
 Their native wealth, not mines of glittering ore,
 Nor costly gems, to deck the victor's spoil ;
 Teach them the riches of their genial soil ; 555
 Where nature waits for man, her tardy priest,
 To raise the fire and consecrate the feast,
 To waft sweet incense through the desert air,
 And plant the cedar on the lion's lair.
 Yet health shall bless the land to wrongs a prey, 560
 The slave of slaves, devote to vassal sway ;
 Daughter of Afric, leave thy living grave,
 Resume the sacred dow'r that nature gave.

Lo ! type of thee, the man who far has trac'd
 His lonely steps along the burning waste, 565
 Whilst the fierce whirlwind rolls, in awful wrath,
 A sandy mountain o'er his darken'd path ;

When parch'd with thirst, beneath the burning sky

He lays him down, to murmur and to die; 370

If then, 'mid hea'vn's vast track of endless blue,

One milk-white spot arrests his pensive view,

Small as the new moon's wreath of silv'ry light,

When first she gleams upon the brow of night,

Cheer'd by the gracious sign, he clasps in pray'r 375

The hands that dropt supinely in despair;

Another moment—to a snowy shrowd,

The wreath expands, the next a sail-spread cloud;

Far o'er the azure deep its hue extends,

The whirlwind sinks, the gath'ring flood descends, 380

The bounteous streams refresh the vital breath,

And he who sat beneath the shade of death,

Rais'd from the dust, in heav'n again explores

His chart of hope, rejoices and adores.

Daughter of Afric—dost thou ask a sign? 395

Heal'd is the bosom wound, so lately thine—

Be this thy pledge—the oppressor's hand is stay'd,

And hope reveals the good so long delay'd.

Though, through his little hour of pride and wealth,

The tyrant desolates the mourner's path; 400

Think not his might may heav'n's rich boons confine,

Or lock from man munificence divine.

What power to solitary wilds convey'd

The blooming bud—or rais'd the verdant blade?

On viewless wings the winds their burthen bear ; 605
 The travell'd bird, long beating through the air,
 On some rude isle, by human foot untrac'd,
 Alights—first planter of the lonely waste.

The wretched slave, accurst by Europe's crime,
 Ne'er knew what lovely arts adorn'd her clime : 610
 No science visited his world of woe,
 Nor faith impell'd a happier sphere to know ;
 Yet these, by him unlov'd, unknown, have shed
 The balm of pity on his outcast head :

These, with bland influence, chang'd th' oppressor's mind,
 The stubborn soften'd, made the cruel kind ; 616
 Till mercy kindled in their genial breath,
 And wafted freedom to the haunts of death.

Was there not joy in Britain's wide domain
 When sceptred justice smote the ruthless chain ? 620
 Who triumph'd not, the wise, the good, the brave,
 The christian, by his hopes inspir'd to save ;
 The freeman, born to loath oppression's name ;
 The patriot, jealous of his country's fame ;
 Yet is there one, with low'ring brow of care, 625
 Whose silence chides the joy he scorns to share ;
 Who mocks the hero's and the patriot's bays,
 Or coldly sullen spurns his country's praise ;
 His country—no—let commerce claim her son,
 Her parasite—by interest only won ; 630

Not aw'd by justice, though by power control'd,
 Whose pride is lucre, and whose worship's gold ;
 It grieved him not, when Britain stoop'd to bribe
 To ruthless violence a savage tribe,
 And spread corruption to untutor'd climes, 635
 Pander and patron of barbarian crimes !
 Or nurs'd with mother's love, bēyond the waves,
 A race of tyrants in a realm of slaves :
 When slav'ry wafted in the tainted breeze,
 Disgrace and death, corruption and disease, 640
 He yet rejoic'd, for commerce at the helm
 Auspicious smil'd, and bless'd the guilty realm.
 Oh ! thou whose soul the gen'rous care disclaims,
 Who mock'st the patriot's visionary aims,
 Untouch'd by virtue, whom no glory fires, 645
 Too wise, too subtle, for sublime desires ;
 Let reason's voice thy sordid zeal reprove,
 And prudence warm, though pity fails to move.
 Is commerce all ? shall her omnific word
 Impart its valour to the hero's sword ? 650
 Has she a gale as pure as honour's breath,
 Through life unsullied, and serene in death ?
 Know, virtue only can the strength create
 That clothes in native majesty a state ;
 Virtue alone that sacred spirit pours, 655
 With which the hero springs, the patriot soars ;

Oh youth of notions ! loveliest in thy might,
 Whose eyes diffuse the ever-radiant light ;
 Virtue, thou breath'st of life untam'd by time,
 Thine is the impulse and the power sublime : 660
 The firm, unconquerable will is thine,
 Force passing strength, the energy divine.
 By thee inspired, Batavia's sons defied
 The hosts of Spain, and awed imperial pride,
 And Holland's level shores by thee became 665
 A realm of valour, and a fief of fame.—
 Degenerate race, whom av'rice now inspires,
 Cold are the ashes of their noble sires ;
 Lost is the bark of gallant port that bore
 The ark of Liberty to Albion's shore ; 670
 Yet Commerce here had wav'd her partial hand,
 And lavish'd bounties on the barren sand :
 But sordid feelings with her boons she gave,
 The soul of thrift, ungenial to the brave ;
 Did credit thrive ? none sigh'd for honour's wane ; 675
 The love of glory sunk in lust of gain.
 Rise not, Amboyna, to the sully'd page,
 Nor Banda—relie of flagitious rage ;
 Nor thou, oh Surinam ! whose tainted air
 Still breathes of death, of terror, and despair. 680
 But where was Commerce in the evil hour,
 When rush'd the Gaul with swift destruction's pow'r ?

Invok'd in vain, she quaff'd her spicy gale,
Or loit'ring, slumber'd on her silken sail.

Lavish to give, but careless to defend,

685

A true retainer, and perfidious friend;

Fond but not faithful, gentle yet unkind,

She left the land, that liberty resign'd:

But left despoil'd of honour, fortune, fame,

To secret vassalage and open shame.

690

Know, Commerce follows nature's social laws,

As peace or charity her blessing draws—

Still shall she bear from Afric's genial plains

Their native wealth, though man untouched remains;

She hides no dagger in her flowing vest,

695

But frankly comes, caressing and caret:

The fields rejoice beneath her gentle tread,

Nor from her touch the lotus bends its head.

But thou, who loath'st thy fellow-man to trace

In the dark aspect of the Negro's race,—

700

Go seek his home, his native worth behold,

Unspoil'd by lucre, and uncurst with gold—

True to his brother, to the stranger kind,

Nor fraud, nor treachery pollutes his mind;

Falsehood he spurns, and sacred holds his trust;

705

Till scorn'd beneficent, till injur'd just.

And shall not peace his thirst for vengeance tame,

When freedom fires him with a nobler aim?

Has heaven no gracious ministry design'd
 To ripen reason in his simple mind ? 710

To lead him on where science sheds her ray,
 And glad his soul with truth's eternal day ?
 Let Britain's sons the fruitful coast explore,
 And kindly bless the race they wrong'd before ;
 With gentle promises invite to toil, 715
 With precious gifts endow the docile soil ;
 Till Afric's race in grateful rev'rence bend,
 And hail the teacher where they find the friend.
 Each nation in its shell has once repos'd,
 Its wings unfolded, and its form unclos'd ; 720
 Each country known, the feeble and the strong,
 The magic spell of superstition's song,
 'Mid reason's twilight sounded in her ear,
 Which dup'd the wise, and heroes taught to fear.
 Wild was thy aspect then, immortal Thame, 725
 When Roman chiefs, the mighty heirs of fame,
 Plung'd in thy rippling flood the pond'rous oar,
 And o'er thy waves the lofty eagles bore.
 Now diff'rent forms are thine ; with swelling pride,
 Behold yon gallant bark serenely glide ; 730
 Prone from her mast she drops the flaunting sail,
 And steals with graceful skill the flitting gale :
 Blest be her course, no idol guards her prow,
 No wat'ry god receives the tim'rous vow,

No victim bleeds the hostile winds to tame, 735
 No omens issue from the crackling flame,
 No augur now pursues with anxious eye
 The bird, all reckless of his boding sigh.
 At careless ease the helmsman sits reclin'd,
 Auspicious hope the regent of his mind ; 740
 Rude though he be, and void of letter'd lore,
 He dares the azure page of heav'n explore,
 And, leaning on his compass, boldly sweep
 Through nature's wide inhospitable deep.
 Benignant Truth ! thou only couldst impart, 745
 Such happy boldness to the human heart ;
 Thou, man's best friend through nature's wide domain,
 Dost lead him on to *conquer* and to *reign*.
 No fatal wreath o'er blasted fields to wave,
 To build *renown* on *desolation's* grave— 750
 But gently from our earthly sphere to chase
 Gigantic error, and her evil race ;
 To grasp with noble pride creation's plan,
 An empire worthy of immortal man !
 Light of the world ! to thee no altars blaze, 755
 No dome resplendent with the diamond's rays
 Invites thy presence—thee, no tyrant's frown
 Appals, nor charms the victor's laurel'd crown :
 Choak'd by oppression, 'mid the cries of death,
 Thou flee'st with virtue from corruption's breath, 760

And bend'st thy course, as eagle freedom flies,
To seek some sage retir'd in lowly guise ;
Fain with some sage, in humble peace to rest,
And make thy temple in his spotless breast.

Oh ! happy he, though fortune from his door

765

Should turn offended by thy hallow'd lore,

Whose lofty soul thy whisper'd call obeys,

And but to thee, his guiltless homage pays :

Screen'd from the sordid passions that await

The splendid vulgar, and ignoble great ;

770

Touch'd by a higher aim than public praise,

Fraught with a dearer love than e'er decays ;

Rich in perennial wants, the high desires

That nature's never fading beauty fires.

Lord of himself, or only bow'd his knee

775

In honourable vassalage to thee ;

What asks his heart ? not perishable pow'r,

Nor fame's frail record of the passing hour :

For thee, oh ! sacred 'Truth, he breathes alone

His secret prayer : thy glory, not his own,

780

To see thy trophies rise, thy triumphs trace,

Thy reign, perpetual as the human race !

Yes, honour'd Newton, when the grateful bust

Thy country rais'd is mould'ring with thy dust ;

When dull oblivion drinks the hero's name,

785

Thy proud coeval, (once the lord of fame,))

And none recalls the poet's votive lays,
 That haply once diffus'd thy early praise ;
 Yet, what thou wast, what thou shouldst be, alone
 Shall reach to climes to science yet unknown : 790

The lofty hopes, the subtle web of thought,
 Thy fancy trac'd, thy matchless wisdom wrought ;
 The dreams sublime thy lonely vigils knew,
 When nature's image met thy raptur'd view ;
 These sacred relics of thy gifted mind, 795

For every age, and every race design'd,
 Shall still descend, where genius wakes to give
 The breath of hope, to bid its spirit live,
 To tempt the immortal soul to nature's source,
 Beyond thine own, to guide its daring course, 800

From earth to heav'n to trace the harmonious line,
 And draw the *human* nearer the *divine*.
 Benignant Truth, thou dwellest in the light,
 That first from Bethl'hem dawn'd on mortal sight ;
 Oh ! far diffuse the health-inspiring beam, 805

To Niger's banks, to Ganges' hallow'd stream,
 To every clime the gentle faith extend,
 That gives to all, one father and one friend ;
 That blesses man in every change of fate,
 When poor ennobles, and protects if great ; 810

His vices tames, or latent strength supplies
 To prop his flagging virtues as they rise ;

1

3

5

In youth allays his wild impulsion'd rage,
 And nourishes with hope his drooping age;
 The proud appeases, makes the feeble brave, 815
 And gilds with joy the passes of the grave.
 Where dwells that light, from mists of passion clear,
 There, fairer virtues glad the human sphere;
 Immortal hopes a purer breath supply,
 And pity seeks the shrine of piety. 820

Touch'd by what spirit, by what impulse wrought,
 Did Clarkson mourn in solitary thought?
 Youth's buoyant spirit languish'd in his frame,
 He turn'd from pleasure, and grew cold to fame:
 But not in moody loneliness he pin'd 825

For fortune treach'rous, or for friends unkind;
 His manly soul disdain'd the selfish care,
 And griev'd for wrongs he was not doom'd to share.
 The exile's pangs his tedious days opprest,
 The captive's cries perturb'd his nightly rest, 830
 And oft, from social scenes, he rush'd to scan
 The laws of fate, and ask if such were man.
 Oh ! warm'd by charity—the angel guest,
 Of all man's heavenly ministrants the best;
 (Unhail'd or unreveal'd in ages past, 835
 Of all the virtues loveliest and last;) By her, inspir'd to take the suppliant's place,
 To live unbless'd for Afric's injur'd race;

By her sustain'd, through years of dull delay,
 Patient and firm, he kept his dubious way,
 Nor left the charge that prudence bade him shun,
 Till slavery fell ; the bloodless fight was won.
 Then virtue triumph'd in her votive train,
 A gen'rous nation rais'd the grateful strain ;
 Not those alone who lent the virtuous aid,
 But him, the tenant of the lowly shade,
 Who to the stateman's tutelary care
 Gave his meek suffrage and unbarter'd pray'r ;
 And, kind partaker of the gracious aim,
 His banner bore, unconscious of his fame. 840

So the blithe boy, unus'd to ocean's storms,
 And haply shelter'd by his father's arms,
 Mounts the trim deck, erect in manly pride,
 Though scarcely conscious how the task is plied ;
 O'er the slow stream his head is oft declin'd,
 His beck'ning hand now woos the tardy wind ;
 Flush'd are his cheeks, his full-orb'd eyes betray
 The soul perturb'd—his gesture chides delay ;
 As if his little limbs the bark might force,
 And those sweet April eyes direct its course. 855

In our free clime, no laws dissocial bind
 To one small sphere the reason of mankind :
 Oft to the great, the lowly mind supplies
 The pregnant thought, the simple lead the wise ; 860

The poor man's pray'r, breath'd in some silent bow'r,
Shall reach at length the sullen ear of pow'r; 866
And truths first whisper'd by the lonely sage,
A realm enlighten and inspire an age.
The patriot sigh'd, when melting at the woes
Of Afric's sons, the voice of pity rose; 870
But soon, with nobler confidence imprest,
He call'd his country from her guilty rest;
Heroes and sages kindled as he mov'd,
The wondering senate listen'd and approv'd;
All ranks resounded to the sacred call, 874
And mercy's gracious beam encircled all.

NOTES.

Note ^a line 7. *Benignant Sharpe, to thee these lays I bear.* Granville Sharpe early in life acquired the honourable appellation of the Negro's advocate; and by his meritorious exertions in the courts of law, finally obtained for Negroes, in this country, an exemption from Slavery. Mr. Sharpe was elected chairman of the committee for the abolition, and was ever considered as the father of the cause.

Note ^b line 147. *Thus in those isles where, gazing with delight,
Columbus first reposed his aching sight.*

Columbus discovered the islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Jamaica, before he had ascertained the existence of the American continent. The native Indians found on these islands, were reduced, by the Spaniards, to the condition of slaves; but the race was soon exterminated by the cruelty of their invaders.

Note ^c line 203. *Lo type of thee, &c.* The Paria, or Chandala, is a Hindoo who has forfeited his cast: the attainder is perpetuated to his most remote posterity: for this reason, forfeiture of cast is the most tremendous penalty that can be inflicted on the Hindoo.

Line 227. *No monster there, but native to the clime.* Domestic slaves are in Africa protected by the laws; the master cannot dispose of them contrary to their inclinations, without submitting the case to the decision of the elders; but such as fall into slavery by the chances of war, are entirely at the mercy of the masters. Mr. Park mentions several instances of solitary captives, who had made their escape from slavery, and, after incredible perils and dangers, returned to their native tribe.

Note ^d line 293. *Enough for him with kindred dust to rest.* The Negroes attach great importance to the privilege of being buried with their relations; when a freeman dies, it is common to dig a grave in his garden, close to his hut, and beneath the shade of his favourite tree.

Note ^e line 315. *To raise the raft of reeds, the walls of loam.* A circular mud wall, about four feet high, upon which is placed a conical roof, com-

posed of bamboo and sod, thatched with grass, forms alike the palace of the king, and the hovel of the slave. Park.

Note¹ line 334. *A task, perchance, perform'd in pensive thought.* It is usual for the Negroes to weave the cloth of which their funeral shroud is composed; in like manner they prepare their wedding garments: the cloth is produced from the cotton tree, which grows in their gardens.

Note¹ line 344. *Within the Bentang's venerable shade.* The Bentang is a small area fenced with canes, and placed under the shade of the tabba tree; it is the common resort of business and pleasure: trials are held there; the inhabitants assemble in the evening to hear stories; the singing men, or tillikas, who are accustomed to produce extemporeaneous songs on every occasion, regularly attend the Bentang.

Note¹ line 359. *Hail'd, though unknown, &c.* Strangers repair to the Bentang, which, like the Pagan altars of antiquity, is the shrine of hospitality.

Note¹ line 378. *Where the great spirit makes his bower of rest.* According to Mr. Park, the untutored Negroes conceive the hills to be the favourite haunt of some supreme intelligence.

Line 405. *The annual fires had blazed, the joyous rise.* The burning of the grass, at the termination of the harvest, is a custom prevalent in many districts; it is described by Park as a scene of terrific grandeur; it is followed by a sweet refreshing verdure, and the country is rendered more pleasant and salubrious.

Line 431. *Full fraught with ill was that funeral year.* In some parts of Africa, the year is characterised by any memorable event which has occurred in consequence of disease, famine, or war.

Note¹ line 442. *To ward destruction from his hapless race.* During the horrors of famine, it is not uncommon for parents to consign their children to bondage.

Note¹ line 485. *Sac mark'd the traces of the Son's feet.* In Park, we have a description of a wretched female captive, who, being unable to keep up with the coffin, was left to perish in the desert.

Note¹ line 413. *The Sofie potent o'er each human harm.* The Sofie is a distich often extracted from the Koran, which the Moalim priests write on scraps of paper, and sell to the simple natives, by whom they are supposed to possess extraordinary magical properties. Park.

The art of writing is in Africa considered as a species of magic.

Note * line 257. *The korro sweeps responsive whilst he sings.* The Africans possess several musical instruments; the Korro is a harp of eighteen strings.

Note * line 541. *Seems not the cir &e's choral call to hear.* The clapping of hands in the manner of a chorus, is a custom of great antiquity; and was common in the East.

Note * line 738. *The bird all reckless of his boding sigh.* Various superstitious usages were practised by ancient navigators to propitiate the vindictive deities.

THE END.